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**University of Michigan Publications**

**LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**VOLUME XVI**

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**THE SOURCES OF  
JOHN DRYDEN'S COMEDIES**



THE SOURCES OF  
JOHN DRYDEN'S  
COMEDIES

BY  
NED BLISS ALLEN

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## PREFACE

### I

**F**EW writers have had so much critical work devoted to them as has John Dryden. His poetry and essays were early studied, their sources noted and discussed, the rhyme and the meter of the one and the literary style of the other written on exhaustively. His heroic plays and tragedies have been only slightly less thoroughly treated. Articles which confine themselves merely to Dryden's use and temporary relinquishment of rhyme in his heroic plays would make a good-sized bibliography.

But very little critical study has been given to Dryden's comedies; in fact, there is no one book which devotes itself solely to them. They are touched on in biographies of Dryden, in histories of Restoration drama or of Restoration literature as a whole, and in a few works on Dryden's criticism; but the authors who discuss them do so only as the least important and least interesting portion of a larger task.

In view of this fact some readers of the following chapters may think that I have given too much of my space to calling attention to the errors and the omissions of former critics, such as Sir Walter Scott, George Saintsbury, and Allardyce Nicoll. To such readers let me say as emphatically as possible that I realize that — because of the limited nature of my field — I deserve no great credit for having found mistakes in the more comprehensive works of these men. My reason for calling attention to their errors in my text and footnotes originally was to answer any possible question by those who were directing the work on my dissertation as to whether or



not there was new work to be done on my subject. And when I came to prepare the material for publication I decided that the references in question were interesting enough to be retained, even though some of them are not very important.

As a preface to an outline of my study of the comedies I shall point out what the more important of the critical works which touch on the subject are, though it should be clearly understood that none of them are recommended as being at all complete in their discussion of the comedies. Many of them would hardly be worthy of mention, had the comedies received the critical attention they merit in more adequate treatises.

*Momus Triumphans: or the Plagiaries of the English Stage* (1688), by Gerard Langbaine, and the enlargement of it, *An Account of the English Dramatic Poets* (1691), were an attempt to list the sources of the works of many dramatists, Dryden among them. All Dryden's comedies and tragicomedies were included in the second of the two works, except *Love Triumphant*, which appeared too late for inclusion. As is to be proved in the chapters to follow, the suggestions of Langbaine are valuable and should have been used by later editors. Nevertheless, a mere list of sources does not constitute a critical treatment of the comedies. Langbaine's study, therefore, is important, but not very enlightening in itself.

Theophilus Cibber has treated Dryden in his *Lives of the Poets* (1753), and Samuel Johnson has done likewise in his work of the same name (1779), but Cibber did little more than republish Langbaine, and Johnson showed the slightest possible interest in the comedies. Malone (1800) and Scott (1806) in their *Lives of Dryden* also gave only slight notice to them, though Scott, of course, added to the material in his *Life* by his short critical prefaces to each of the plays in the

later volumes of his edition of Dryden's works. Scott, however, has contented himself for the most part with commenting on what Dryden said about each comedy in his critical prefaces and dedications and discussing briefly the most obvious borrowings Dryden made — such as his use of *Le Feint Astrologue* in *The Mock Astrologer*, for instance.

Macaulay's article on Dryden in *The Edinburgh Review* (1828), in which he launched a diatribe against the comedies, has no critical value. In fairness to Macaulay it should be said that it does not attempt to be anything other than what it is, a sermon. But it seems to have influenced later opinion (and opinion that pretended to be critical) to such an extent that it must be referred to here. Macaulay insisted on doing with Dryden's comedies what he did elsewhere with those of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar, that is, on applying the moral test. Instead of judging Dryden's characters by the standards of art, he obviously treated them as if they were living human beings. His characterization of Dryden's comic heroes and heroines as "gross, selfish, unblushing, lying libertines of both sexes" is well known, as is his statement that Dryden "earned his daily bread by pandering to the vicious taste of the pit,"<sup>1</sup> but in a passage less often quoted he is even more sweeping:

The men of Etherege and Vanbrugh are bad enough. . . . But they do not approach to the Celadons, the Wildbloods, the Woodalls, and the Rhodophils of Dryden. . . . Their love is the appetite of beasts; their friendship the confederacy of knaves.

After abusing Dryden's heroines in equally strong language Macaulay continues:

[In Dryden's comedies] we are in a world where there is no humanity, no veracity, no sense of shame, — a world for which any good-natured man would gladly take in exchange the society of Milton's devils.

It is not necessary to point out how unjudicious was the attitude which made it possible for Macaulay to class witty, graceful Rhodophil with Woodall, of whom some of his statements are partly true. In fact, we live in an age so different from that of Macaulay that it should be no longer necessary to protest against his pronouncements. Nevertheless, the attack quoted above retarded the study of Dryden's comedies during the last century. W D. Christie, for instance, in his preface to Dryden's poetical works (1897), says little of the comedies except:

His first plays pandered to the low tastes by coarse language and indecent ideas, and in this respect Dryden continued as he began, showing . . . in his comedies . . . a prurient love of the indecent which is a blot on his character and tarnishes his fame.

Churton Collins, writing two years earlier, makes but slight pretence to be more judicious. It is in his *Essays and Studies* that he says.

[Dryden] had, in truth, few of the qualities essential to a comic dramatist . . . He had indeed little humour: he had no grace; he had no eye for these subtler improprieties of character and conduct which are the soul of comedy, what wit he had was coarse and boisterous; he had no power of inventing ludicrous incidents, he could not manage the light artillery of colloquial raillery.

Such undocumented attacks, ridiculous in the scope of their statements, would almost certainly never have been written if Macaulay had not shown the way.

Twentieth-century scholars are not very likely to be thus influenced by Macaulay's attack — if they know the plays in question at first hand. But not many even today do know them, for the authority of the nineteenth-century critic still lingers on in a kind of convention among students of English literature to omit Dryden's comedies from their readings in Restoration drama.

A few other works which throw some light on Dryden's comedies should be mentioned. During the years 1882-93 George Saintsbury reëdited Scott's edition of Dryden's works, but, aside from adding the comments of Pepys (whose diary had been discovered since Scott wrote) to Scott's short critical prefaces, Saintsbury did almost nothing. Margaret Sherwood's dissertation, *Dryden's Dramatic Theory and Practice* (1899), contains what is probably the best general discussion of the comedies that has yet appeared. Her thesis, that in them Dryden failed to achieve complete success because he had no individual and lasting conception of the comic, is sustained by no new critical material, but she shows an intimate and unhorried acquaintance with the plays in spite of Macaulay, and her personal reactions to her subject are always interesting.

Discussions of Dryden's comedies in histories of literature, such as the one in Sir Adolphus William Ward's chapter on Dryden in Volume VIII of *The Cambridge History of English Literature* (1912), have added little to our knowledge of the subject. Perhaps one exception should be made to this statement. Allardyce Nicoll's *Restoration Drama*, though it contains many errors which a closer acquaintance with existing criticism on Dryden's comedies would have avoided, has a valuable discussion of our author's contribution to the Comedy of Manners in his pairs of witty, railing lovers. Then, too, Nicoll's book is invaluable for its play lists and reprints of warrants for the production of plays at court.

Four small but significant contributions of four German scholars should be cited. The scholars are Carl Hartmann, who wrote on Dryden's use of Molière in 1885; Philip Ott, who wrote on the same subject three years later; Edwin Schröder, who in 1905 studied the sources of *Love Triumphant*; and L. Albrecht, who in the following year did the

same thing for *Sir Martin Mar-all*. Allison Gaw's dissertation on the relation between Sir Samuel Tuke and Dryden, published in 1917, should also be mentioned. It has thrown light on Dryden's first two plays.

After I had begun to prepare my work for publication Montague Summers' *Dryden, The Dramatic Works*, appeared, and I was afraid until I saw it that it might have anticipated my discoveries. I found, however, that, though Mr. Summers' volumes contained much interesting and valuable material, they had not made my book unnecessary. In order to make this fact clear I have called attention in footnotes to Mr. Summers' errors and omissions—as I had already done to those of other critics. I should add that I have made one or two emendations in my text after reading the work and have given Mr. Summers credit in my notes.

Somewhat later a new book by W. Harvey-Jellie made me fear again, by its title, *Le Théâtre classique en Angleterre*, that some of my discoveries might have been anticipated. When I had secured it, however, and had tremblingly opened it, I found that I should not even need any new footnotes. For, except for the title, chapter headings, and a few reworded sentences, it is the same as the book Mr. Harvey-Jellie wrote in 1906, *Les Sources du théâtre anglais à l'époque de la Restauration*; and I had already discussed the earlier book.<sup>1</sup>

One of the reasons for the neglect of Dryden's comedies has already been cited: certainly the influence of Macaulay has been important in lessening interest in them, just as it was important in causing the plays of the Manners group to be neglected for many years—as John Leslie Palmer has shown. But Dryden's own dispraise of his comedies has had

<sup>1</sup> There is one difference in Mr. Harvey-Jellie's two works that I have not mentioned. For the earlier one he received a doctor's degree at the University of Paris, for the later one, a doctor's degree at the University of Montreal.

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perhaps equal weight. Again and again in his essays and prefaces he apologizes for the comedies, blaming their faults on the taste of the audiences for which he was writing. He does not claim, for instance, that *The Wild Gallant* is a good play; he merely says in the prologue that "He's bound to please, not to write well." He admits also that *The Spanish Friar* is bad, but explains in the preface that it was "given to the people." Most important of all, he denies in his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* that he makes any pretense to be a good comic dramatist, saying that he knows he is not "fitted by nature to write comedy." He seldom, in fact, calls one of his comedies good, and he is quite apt to say that it is "bad enough to please."

The result of Dryden's lack of enthusiasm about his comedies and of Macaulay's moral indignation apropos of them — the neglect of this portion of Dryden's literary work — is unfortunate. For, if my conclusions are correct, a study of Dryden's comedies is of greater aid to one who wants to understand the Restoration period than is a study of the productions of several who did better than he in the field; since his habit of catering to the caprice of the moment and of imitating the latest success in comedy, whatever it was, made him a weathervane of dramatic tendencies. Ward's statement that Restoration drama can best be understood by starting with Dryden as a center holds for the comedies as well as for the serious plays.

## II

That Dryden's comedies have been treated for the most part as a portion of some larger subject and therefore summarily is unfortunate, for this part of his work lends itself especially badly to summaries. Aside from the fact that such

treatment does not necessitate careful examination of the separate plays and tends to encourage the repetition of errors made by early critics — exceptions which could be made to all summaries — it is certainly true that Dryden's comedies lack the unity, the homogeneous and connected development of manner and method which make a man's work easy to summarize.

The apparent unity which such summaries give to Dryden's work led me astray at first. When I began my study I intended to start with a chapter on the dramatic conventions which were alive at the time Dryden began to write for the stage, and then to show how his comedies, modified by foreign literary influences and by contemporary English life, grew into something that could be called Dryden's contribution to Restoration comedy. In view of Dryden's insistence in his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* on the importance of the English heritage which he received from Fletcher and Jonson, it seemed probable that his comedies might be unified by their use of that heritage.

But it soon became clear that such a method would not work; for when I tried to arrange the plays I was studying so as to show a regular development, the exceptions were so numerous as to obscure the plan. Dryden's rule was to sacrifice everything to please the public; and the public was capricious in its tastes. Therefore we find him starting out in *The Wild Gallant* (1662/3) as a follower of the English comic tradition. Soon, however, he begins to feel that the wit of Fletcher and Ben Jonson and their pre-Restoration successors is outmoded and decides, as he says in the preface to *The Mock Astrologer* (1671), the epilogue to *The Conquest of Granada* (1670-71), the *Defense of the Epilogue* (1672), and the dedications to *Marriage à la Mode* (1673) and *The Assignation* (1673), to make his characters like his witty

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courtly contemporaries, though, of course, the already growing Manners tradition which had had its beginnings in Fletcher and Jonson influences him at this time, too.

But several of his comedies depart from this trend. In one of the earliest and one of the latest of them — *Sir Martin Mar-all* (1667) and *Amphitryon* (1690) — he imitates Molière closely. Several of them are indebted to French novels, particularly two of his later tragicomedies, *The Spanish Friar* (1679–80) and *Don Sebastian* (1689), the comic parts of both of which are derived in some measure from *Le Pelerin*, a popular French novel. Finally, in *Mr. Limberham*, written about midway in his dramatic career (1677–78), the determining influence is neither Fletcher, nor the Manners tradition, nor Molière, but the comedies of vulgar intrigue of D'Urfey and Behn.

Even within the separate comedies we find Dryden writing in different and sometimes contradictory traditions, *The Mock Astrologer* and *The Assniation* being particularly good examples of this. About the only lasting change that is clearly seen is a change from the witty high comedy of some of the early plays to low comedy, though the low comedy of *Mr. Limberham*, the first of the plays of this second period, is not in the same tradition as the farce of *Don Sebastian* and *Love Triumphant*.

This peculiar heterogeneity in the comedies of Dryden has not gone unnoticed by other critics. It is significant, for instance, that Allardyce Nicoll, though he discusses all other comic dramatists under such headings as "Comedy of Humours," "Comedy of Manners," and "Comedy of Intrigue," feels that Dryden can only be treated under a separate heading which he calls "Comedies of Dryden." Miss Sherwood, in her *Dryden's Theory and Practice*, has shown that in writing in the different conventions Dryden failed to give his



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comic productions even the unity of a single and continuous conception of the comic. She says (p. 57) :

Dryden's comedy shows with great clearness his lack of point of view. Great comedy, no less than great tragedy, requires individual apprehension of life. There is no more subtle interpreter of man's spirit than his sense of the laughable. One touch in Shakespeare of the comic that is tragic too, one touch in Cervantes of the ironic difference between the ideal and the real, betrays the whole man. In Shakespeare, great diversity of humorous effects proves, on close study, a unit — variety of perception of the incongruous from a steadfast point of view. Launce, Falstaff, Touchstone, the Fool in *Lear*, present only different aspects of a unique insight into the contradictions of life. Molière's comedies, where individuals are arraigned at the bar of common sense, and sentenced to be laughed at, are stamped with a definite idea of social right and wrong. Congreve's utterly unmoral work is held together by a peculiar appreciation of the humorous, his sense of the absurd pretences of the world and of society. There is nothing in Dryden's comedy to correspond with Molière's keen spirit of criticism, or with Congreve's individuality of perception. Anxious to please, and sure enough as critic to know what would please, he copied first one dramatist, then another. He had no sense of the comic that was his own.

Though Miss Sherwood has here exaggerated the unity of the comic point of view of Shakespeare and Molière (she ignores, for instance, Molière's non-corrective farcical comedies) and though she has not taken account of the fact that there is no disadvantage in varying one's point of view provided one does not do so within a play, she has indicated the difficulties that a critic of Dryden's comedies faces.

My final conviction that there was no uniformity of development in Dryden's comic drama caused me to alter my first plans. Instead of writing on the development of my author's idea of comedy and illustrating from the different plays, I decided to write on the separate plays and groups of plays, and in each case to pay particular attention to the sources

Dryden used and to the conventions that influenced him. Since the chief indication of the influence of Fletcher and his contemporaries is shown in *The Wild Gallant*, it seemed best to incorporate the discussion of Dryden's relation to pre-Restoration English comedy in the chapter on that play; and for a similar reason I decided to speak of his use of Molière in the discussion of *Sir Martin Mar-all* and *Amphitryon*. This method lacks simplicity, but to be more simple would give a false idea of the plays.

I had hoped to give a larger part of my discussion to Dryden's relation to the other Restoration comic dramatists, but I found that the amount of work which remained to be done on Dryden's sources was so great that his influence on later drama could not be treated without expanding the discussion beyond the bounds of a book. I have tried to be complete, however, in my discussion of the sources of the different comedies, and to treat not only Dryden's borrowings of material from plays, romances, etc., but his reactions to literary influences which affected the form (such as the two-plot form of his tragicomedies) or the spirit of his plays. An inseparable part of this study of sources and influences was, of course, a classification of each play, or, as was necessary in some cases, an exposition of how Dryden has combined elements from different kinds of comedy into a new mixture. These portions of the work were chosen because they are a necessary foundation for any further work on the comedies.

In writing the following chapters and preparing them for publication I have been aided by many suggestions and corrections of friends and scholars. My chief debts are to Professors O. J. Campbell, Louis I. Bredvold, and Paul Mueschke, all of the University of Michigan.

NEWARK, DELAWARE  
August, 1935

N. B. A.



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### NOTE

Unless otherwise indicated, all references to Dryden are to the edition by Sir Walter Scott and George Saintsbury (1882-93). This is referred to in the footnotes as *Works*.

## CHAPTER I

### "THE WILD GALLANT"

#### I

DRYDEN'S first play, *The Wild Gallant* (1663), like many of his comedies, has often been referred to by critics, but never carefully studied. Writers of surveys and compilations have been content to repeat the information, often incomplete and sometimes wrong, of Scott and Saintsbury,<sup>1</sup> or, if they have gone farther back, they have merely noted what Pepys and Langbaine said about the play. Such neglect has even assumed the aspect of avoidance, until it almost seems that this first dramatic creation of a great poet is being treated as beneath notice. It is true that *The Wild Gallant* is not very valuable as literature, but to one interested in Dryden it is nearly as worthy of notice as any of his later plays. In this it is like other first dramas, *Love's Labour's Lost* or *Paracelsus*, for instance.

During the last few years *The Wild Gallant* has been glanced at from time to time, as reflected in the polished mirror of the Restoration comedy of manners. Elements in it peculiar to this type have been noticed by Miss Lynch,<sup>2</sup> Nicoll,<sup>3</sup> Summers,<sup>4</sup> and Krutch,<sup>5</sup> and the tendency seems to

<sup>1</sup> *The Works of John Dryden Illustrated with Notes . . .*, by Sir Walter Scott (1808), revised and corrected by George Saintsbury. This will hereafter be referred to in the footnotes as *Works*.

<sup>2</sup> Kathleen Lynch, *The Social Mode of Restoration Comedy*, p. 135.

<sup>3</sup> Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of Restoration Drama*, p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> Montague Summers, Introduction to *The Adventures of Five Hours*, ed. B. Van Thal, p. xi.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Wood Krutch, *Comedy and Conscience after the Restoration*, pp. 15-17.

be, without sufficient justification perhaps, to divide the honor of being the first comedy of manners between it and Etherege's *Love in a Tub*. But no study of the play, of its sources, and of its relation, not only to the comedy of manners, but also to Dryden's own later comedies, has been attempted.

## II

The belief that *The Wild Gallant* has a Spanish source, though the assumption on which it had been based was destroyed by Professor Allison Gaw in 1907, persists in modern criticism. As Gaw pointed out,<sup>6</sup> the only evidence that Dryden used a Spanish play is in his prologue. In this prologue two astrologers are represented as reading the zodiac in order to prophesy the success of the play about to be put on. After giving his opinion that many things make the future look dark, the Second Astrologer says:

But yet the greatest mischief does remain,  
The twelfth apartment <sup>7</sup> bears the lords of Spain;  
Whence I conclude, it is your author's lot,  
To be endangered by a *Spanish plot*.

Here the Prologue observes:

Our poet yet protection hopes from you,  
*But bribes you not with any thing that's new;*  
Nature is old, which poets imitate,  
And, for wit, those, that boast their own estate,  
Forget Fletcher and Ben before them went,  
Their elder brothers, and that vastly spent;  
So much, 'twill hardly be repair'd again,  
Not, though supplied with all the *wealth of Spain*.

<sup>6</sup> Allison Gaw, "Tuke's 'Adventures of Five Hours' in Relation to the 'Spanish Plot' and to John Dryden," *Publ Univ. Pennsylvania, Series in Philology and Literature*, XIV (1917), 1-61. The dissertation was first written in 1907.

<sup>7</sup> Of the zodiac.

<sup>8</sup> Italics mine here and previously.

Hurried editors, who were not especially interested in this "failure" of Dryden,<sup>9</sup> had jumped to the conclusion that two of the phrases which I have italicized above, "Spanish plot" and "wealth of Spain," indicate, in spite of what now seem obvious contradictions, that Dryden's source was a Spanish drama. But Gaw showed<sup>10</sup> that Dryden is referring to Sir Samuel Tuke's *Adventures of Five Hours*, a play translated and adapted from the Spanish of Coello,<sup>11</sup> which had appeared at the Duke's theater less than two months before the opening of *The Wild Gallant* and which had enjoyed the greatest success of all dramas since the reopening of the theaters.<sup>12</sup> Dryden, Gaw left no room for doubt, is contrasting his own comedy, which is in the convention of the older English stage, with this new Spanish importation of the rival theater. A quotation of a part of Sir Samuel Tuke's prologue will show how certain it is that Dryden is referring to it:

. . . I dare boldly say,  
*The ENGLISH Stage Ne'r had so New a Play;*  
*The Dress, the Author, and the Scenes are New.*

<sup>9</sup> Scott (*Works*, II, 23) explains that he has not given much attention to *The Wild Gallant* because of its lack of "intrinsic merit."

<sup>10</sup> *Op cit*, pp 15-21.

<sup>11</sup> Apparently the Spanish play was not by Calderón, though it has been attributed to him. This question of authorship is discussed by Gaw (*op cit*, p. 23, n. 2) as well as by Summers in his Introduction to Van Thal's edition.

<sup>12</sup> John Downes in his *Roscius Anglicanus* (p 23) says that it had a first run of thirteen days! There are many indications of the play's popularity. Evelyn notes (*Diary*, January 8, 1662/3) that during its first run it was worth four or five hundred pounds to the comedians. Pepys (*Diary*, January 1, 1662/3) "did long to see it," so much that he sent for a smith to break open the trunk where his wife's clothes were, the maid having gone forth with the keys, so that they could go to it. He called it at this time "the best for the variety and the most excellent continuance of the plot to the very end that ever I saw, or think ever shall." On the 20th of August, 1666, Pepys read *Othello* — "which I ever heretofore esteemed a mighty good play, but having so lately read *The Adventures of Five Hours*, it seems a mean thing."



Yet after our Discoveries of late  
Of their Designs, who would Subvert the State;  
You'll wonder much, if it should prove his<sup>18</sup> Lot,  
To take all ENGLAND with a SPANISH Plot;  
But if through his ill Conduct, or hard Fate  
This Foreign Plot (like that of Eighty Eight)  
Should suffer Shipwrack in your Narrow Seas,  
You'll give your Modern Poet his Writ of Ease;  
For by th' Example of the King of SPAIN,  
He resolves ne'r to trouble you again.

Dryden refers elsewhere to Tuke,<sup>14</sup> and Sir Samuel's influence on him will be discussed further in Chapter II, *The Rival-Ladies*. This, however, is enough to prove that Dryden's reference to a "Spanish plot," his statement that he "bribes you not with anything that's new," and his allusion to the "wealth of Spain," all refer to Tuke's play and prologue. When this is clear all reason for attributing a Spanish source to *The Wild Gallant* has disappeared, and one wonders how Scott,<sup>15</sup> Saintsbury,<sup>16</sup> Gosse,<sup>17</sup> and Ward,<sup>18</sup> as well as all other modern critics prior to Gaw, could have made the mistake of doing so.

As further proof that the play did not have a Spanish source, it should be noted that Gerard Langbaine, Dryden's contemporary, in spite of his unbounded eagerness to discover evidence of plagiarism in Dryden, notes no foreign source for

<sup>18</sup> The author's.

<sup>14</sup> Another reference to Tuke in the 1663 epilogue to *The Wild Gallant* (see below, p 58, n 25) and four references in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* show how large *The Adventures of Five Hours* loomed in Dryden's horizon at this time. In the prologue to *The Rival-Ladies*, in the epilogue to *The Indian Emperor*, and in the epilogue to *Marriage à la Mode* the play is also spoken of. Gaw discusses this, *op cit*, pp. 15-21 and 55-56.

<sup>15</sup> *Works*, II, 24.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 25.

<sup>17</sup> Edmund Gosse, *A History of Eighteenth Century Literature*, p. 41.

<sup>18</sup> A. W. Ward, *A History of English Dramatic Literature . . .*, III, 346.

*The Wild Gallant*.<sup>19</sup> This reticence of Langbaine should have made those who postulated a Spanish plot suspect their error.

If Gaw's discovery had attracted the attention it deserved, discussion of it here would be unnecessary. But G. R. Noyes in 1910<sup>20</sup> still says that Dryden attempted in *The Wild Gallant* "to combine a complicated 'Spanish Plot'" with other borrowings. Again, in 1928 Nicoll<sup>21</sup> says that the plot of the comedy was "professedly modelled on the intrigues of the Spanish theatre." Many other critics also continue to err, even though the *Cambridge History of English Literature*<sup>22</sup> mentions Gaw's work in 1912.

<sup>19</sup> Langbaine discusses *The Wild Gallant* on pages 174-175 of *An Account of the English Dramatic Poets*.

<sup>20</sup> G. R. Noyes, *Selected Dramas of John Dryden*, Introduction, p. xx.

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 215.

<sup>22</sup> VIII, 149, n. Gaw observes (*op. cit.*, p. 16, n) that "this unmistakable evidence that *The Wild Gallant* was not a translation from the Spanish removes the only piece of evidence of any weight supporting the belief that John Dryden had a reading knowledge of Spanish." This is probably right, but the other evidence, which Gaw evidently does not consider "of weight," since he does not mention it, might be discussed. It is as follows (1) The plot of Dryden's *Rival-Ladies* has a great deal of complication — enough to make it comparable to Spanish plays. But this, as I show later (pp. 55-56), does not necessarily indicate a Spanish source, particularly in view of Dryden's explanation of how the play grew in his mind. (2) *An Evening's Love; or, the Mock Astrologer*, often cited as a result of Spanish influence on Dryden (see Martin Hume's *Spanish Influence on English Literature* [London, 1905], pp. 295-296), is apparently derived, not directly from Calderón's *El Astrologo Fingido*, but from Thomas Corneille's version of it, *Le Feint Astrologue*. It is true that Dryden mentions the Spanish and the French play side by side in his Preface (*Works*, III, 250-251), and that he intimates that he has read the Spanish play by his statement "I have added . . . [adventures], which were neither in the French nor Spanish." The fact remains, however, that there is nothing in Dryden's play that proves he used Calderón's. Such words as *juego de cannas* and *Calle mayor* (I, 1), by which Dryden seeks to create an atmosphere proper to his Spanish setting, might easily have been picked up by one who did not know the Spanish language. (3) Spence in his *Anecdotes* (p. 14) quotes Bolingbroke as having said "Dryden assured me that he got more from the Spanish critics alone than from the Italian and French and all others put together." But Spence is always to be considered unreliable when

A knowledge of the true meaning of the prologue of *The Wild Gallant* would have saved critics many hours of wandering in the tropical but (so far as this problem is concerned) fruitless forest of Spanish drama, and many errors. Harvey-Jellie even suggested that the original play was *El Galan Bobo*, an unpublished, lost drama of Lope de Vega;<sup>23</sup> and Noyes<sup>24</sup> and Nicoll,<sup>25</sup> while they did not search for the source play themselves, imagined that they saw in *The Wild Gallant* the intricacies and complications peculiar to Spanish comedy.<sup>26</sup> A synopsis of the plot which is to follow will reveal

not supported by other evidence. Bolingbroke must have been very young when Dryden discussed his favorite critics with him, if he did. (4) In the dedication to *The Rival Ladies* (*Works*, II, 135) Dryden says "All the Spanish and Italian tragedies, I have yet seen, are writ in rhyme." This is one of the strongest pieces of evidence of all. Nevertheless, one's confidence in the truth of the claim is weakened by the unusual number of pretentious and inaccurate statements in the same dedication. A few lines before the sentence quoted, Dryden has announced that Buckhurst's "tragedy of Queen Gorboduc" was written in rhyme, and on the next page he declares that Shakespeare "invented that kind of writing which we call blank verse," in order to "shun the pains of continual rhyming." For once Dryden seems to have been trying to air an erudition he did not possess. (5) Dryden's reference to Sancho Panza's doctor in the *Defence of an Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (*Works*, II, 301) is of no weight, since he may have read Cervantes in translation. If he really knew the Spanish critics as well as Spence's anecdote would indicate, it seems odd that this knowledge is not revealed in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* or in his other essays. That Dryden understood French is certain, that he understood Italian is possibly indicated by his saying in a letter that his cousin talked to him all day long in French and Italian to show his breeding (*The R. B. Adam Library Relating to Dr Samuel Johnson and his Era* [London and New York, 1929], III, 88), but it seems quite possible that he was unable to translate Spanish well enough to use Spanish sources.

<sup>23</sup> W. Harvey-Jellie, *Les Sources du théâtre anglais à l'époque de la Restauration*, p. 76.

<sup>24</sup> *Op. cit.*, Introduction, p. xx.

<sup>25</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 182, 215.

- <sup>26</sup> Montague Summers, while he refers to Gaw's work (without, however, mentioning his name) in his discussion of the source of *The Wild Gallant* in Dryden, *The Dramatic Works*, I, 61, insists that some of the fantastic turns of the play "smack of de Solis, Augustin Moreto, Luis Coello, Francisco de Rojas, Godinez Alarcon, Guillen de Castro, and the many other dramatists who so finely spun web after web of reticulated intrigue." This dazzling list

that there is in reality none of this complication, and that, as will be shown at length, the real sources of the play are indicated by Dryden himself in a part of the prologue not yet quoted:

This play is English, and the growth your own;  
As such, it yields to English plays alone.

These lines, taken together with the references to Fletcher and Jonson in the first part of the prologue, are the best starting point from which to search for Dryden's source.

The plot of *The Wild Gallant* is as follows. Mr. Loveby, the Wild Gallant, who has spent and gambled away all his money, hopes to marry Lady Constance, the witty, strong-minded daughter of Lord Nonsuch. But this "old, rich, humorous" lord has chosen Sir Timorous for her husband, being willing to overlook that knight's awkward bashfulness in consideration of his wealth. Lady Constance, however, has set her heart on Mr. Loveby. She even contrives to have money given him (without his realizing where it comes from) so that he may continue his suit. Madam Isabelle, Lady Constance's cousin, is, like Lady Constance, extremely contemptuous of Sir Timorous, but she determines to marry him for his money. Being a woman of wit and initiative, she succeeds in doing so, mainly by artfully suggesting to Sir Timorous that he is pursuing her, in spite of the antagonism of Burr and Failer, hangers-on and protectors of Sir Timorous. Lady Constance finally gains her father's consent to her marriage with Loveby by pretending, with the help of Isabelle and a pillow, that she is pregnant and therefore in immediate need of a husband. Additional amusement is furnished by

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of names should not blind the reader to the fact that the theory that there is a Spanish source for the play has not been in the least proved or advanced. It is disconcerting to find Gaw's careful and convincing argument dismissed in this summary fashion.

the humours of Justice Trice, Bibber — a jest-loving tailor —, and Mrs. Bibber, his wife. These latter characters have very little to do with the main intrigue, though they are on the stage a rather large part of the time, and they cannot be said to have subintrigues of their own. They merely exhibit their humours.

This series of situations has none of the earmarks of a Spanish plot. The play takes place in London. It lacks the sudden changes in the direction of the action and the complicated tangle of unreciprocated love that Spanish comedies have — that Tuke's play has. The intricacy of the intrigue is, in fact, less even than that of the average Caroline comedy. The play's use of disguise (in the preliminaries of the marriage of Isabelle with Sir Timorous) is in the English tradition. Dryden was telling the truth when he said that *The Wild Gallant* was an English play. It was only when it failed that he turned to what he felt was its antithesis, the Spanish kind of play, and wrote *The Rival-Ladies*.

### III

Since the theory that *The Wild Gallant* has a Spanish source has been shown to be incorrect and since the fact has been established that the play is English, there is no reason why the connection which it has with the English tradition should not have been studied. But almost no interest in this problem has been shown.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> It has, of course, been cursorily observed that Dryden was influenced in this play by his English predecessors. The importance of Jonsonian elements, an importance considered secondary to that of the "Spanish source," however, has been mentioned by nearly every critic who has referred to the play (for instance, by Saintsbury, *Dryden*, p. 29, in *English Men of Letters*) and the allusion to Fletcher in the prologue has caused him also to be cited (Noyes, *op. cit.*, p. xx). One notices, however, that the statements of this kind are general and unverified. This is chiefly due to the fact that the critics' interest

No one, of course, can pretend to speak the last word on the difficult subject of influence. In the production of a poem or a play a great number of forces conspire to produce the result. This was shown in *The Road to Xanadu*, in which Professor Lowes tracked down a surprisingly large number of the stimuli which caused Coleridge to write two of his poems, but even there it is obvious that the task is not complete and that the omission of important sources, because they have not been found, has thrown into too great prominence those that have been given. The elements which are combined in one of Dryden's plays are even harder to trace to their sources, not only because we know much less about him than we do about Coleridge, but because many of the plays from which he drew may be lost.<sup>28</sup> Besides, Dryden seems to have felt a desire to conceal the sources of this first play. Such bloodthirsty plagiarist hunters as Martin Clifford and Langbaine had not yet attacked him, of course, and he had not yet the reason for disguising his borrowings that he was to have later; but the only reference he makes to his source is a statement in the Preface to *The Wild Gallant*: "The plot was not originally my own; but so altered by me (whether for the better or worse I know not) that whoever the author was, he could not have challenged a scene of it."<sup>29</sup> In spite of these difficulties many of the elements of Dryden's *Wild Gallant* which are descended from his predecessors in English comedy may be discovered.

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was always elsewhere, they were studying the comedy of manners or Dryden's poetry, and mentioned this play as an unimportant branch of their subject.

<sup>28</sup> The comedies of Massinger which were burned by Warburton's cook, for instance.

<sup>29</sup> *Works*, II, 27-28. Dryden does not necessarily mean by this that he had any one source for the whole play. If he does refer to any one previous work, it is probably to the *Decameron* (see p. 16), to Shirley's *Lady of Pleasure* (see p. 34), or to Brome's *Sparagus Garden* (see p. 37, n. 95), from each of which, it will be shown, he got a definite suggestion.

For reasons which will become clear during the discussion the play can be pretty definitely divided into two parts, the humours part, which, it develops, was written under the influence of Jonson, and the wittier, more fashionable part, which has in it elements of the Restoration comedy of manners. Whether this latter part is the pioneer in that brilliant group has interested critics much more than has the question of how the humours characters were derived from Jonson. The problem of Jonsonian influence deserves study, however, and will be treated first.

It was natural for Dryden to turn to Jonson in his first play. Jonson had been particularly interested in method and structure and therefore recommended himself to a beginner.<sup>80</sup> And the influence of Jonson on *The Wild Gallant* is large. This is first indicated by Dryden's having observed remarkably well in it — in comparison with his practice in later plays — the unities of time and place. The time covers two days, and all the scenes are laid in London, both of which facts probably point to Jonsonian influence, since Dryden praises Jonson for observing (even more carefully) these unities in *Epicæne*.<sup>81</sup> But Jonson's chief influence is seen in the large number of humours in the play; Lord Nonsuch, Sir Timorous, Justice Trice, Bibber, Mrs. Bibber, Burr, and Failer, all but the first two of whom have almost no function in the play — they merely exhibit their humours. Some of them Dryden may have drawn from life, of course;<sup>82</sup> and Burr and Failer, one feels, could not have been so tiresome as they are had they been created by Dryden or borrowed by him

<sup>80</sup> See also p. 22.

<sup>81</sup> *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, *Works*, XV, 348. Tuke's play, with its observation of the unities, may have had an influence. This is shown by Dryden's mentioning it, too (*ibid.*).

<sup>82</sup> Dryden points out that Morose of *Epicæne* was said to have been drawn from life by Jonson (*ibid.*, p. 349).

from a literary source. At any rate, as will be shown, these characters are all drawn on the Jonsonian plan and exhibited in the Jonsonian manner, the action of the play ceasing while they display their humours.

As has often been observed, of the several different kinds of humours in Jonson, only one, the psychological humour, is explained by the well-known definition in the prologue to *Every Man Out of His Humour*. In his first play Dryden has not imitated Jonson's psychological humours, nor (and this is surprising) his social humours, that is, those characters obsessed by social affectation who make themselves ridiculous by aping those in a social class above them. What he has taken from Jonson is his personifications of caprices or whims, characters who are laughable because they carry an eccentricity to absurd lengths. Such are Morose, Justice Clement, Puntarvolo, and Carlo Buffone in Jonson; and such are Lord Non-such, Justice Trice, Sir Timorous, and Bibber in Dryden's play.<sup>83</sup>

The result of Dryden's using only one type of humour instead of mixing them as Jonson does is that *The Wild Gallant* often becomes farce — whenever, indeed, the humorous characters hold the stage. It is this large element of farce, by the way, which seems to have turned Pepys against the play.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>83</sup> It is important to note that apparently Dryden was interested almost exclusively in this kind of Jonsonian humour. In his explanation of what a Jonsonian humour is (*An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, Works, XV, 349), he states " [Some who would be thought critics] say, it is not enough to find one man of such an humour, it must be common to more, and the more common the more natural. . . . But to convince these people, I need but tell them, that humour is the ridiculous extravagance of conversation, wherein one man differs from all others. If then it be common, or communicated to many, how differs it from other men's? or what indeed causes it to be ridiculous so much as the singularity of it? " This definition does not apply to a psychological humour such as Kiteley of *Every Man in His Humour*

<sup>84</sup> Pepys' *Diary*, February 23, 1662/3. Pepys later enjoyed greatly the farcical *Sir Martin Mar-all*, however, because it had "good wit therein, not fooling" (August 16, 1667).



Scott discovered that a part of the character of Justice Trice was apparently taken from that of Carlo Buffone of *Every Man Out of His Humour*.<sup>35</sup> Carlo does not play backgammon with himself, as does Justice Trice,<sup>36</sup> but his whim of drinking a toast to himself and at the end fighting with himself<sup>37</sup> is probably what suggested Trice's game to Dryden.

There are other Jonsonian elements in Justice Trice's character. The scene in which he has a poor fellow brought before him for getting a wench with child<sup>38</sup> should be compared with Justice Clement's reception of Cob in *Every Man in His Humour*.<sup>39</sup> Both justices are, as gentlemen, antagonistic to the common people. Justice Clement, upon hearing that Cob has presumed to object to the aristocratic weed, tobacco, exclaims: "What! a thread-bare rascal, a beggar, a slave . . . to deprave, and abuse the virtue of an herb so generally received in . . . the chambers of nobles. . . ." And Justice Trice assents heartily to Loveby's observation apropos of the shabby whoremonger: ". . . A poor lousy rascal to intrench upon the game of gentlemen!"<sup>40</sup> That this prejudice against the common people is in both cases a mere personal peculiarity of the character and not a social affectation is important.

Justice Trice's third and most sustained eccentricity is his love for food, and for this there seems to be no suggestion in Jonson. Nevertheless, it, too, is developed in the Jonsonian manner.<sup>41</sup>

Lord Nonsuch, described in the list of *dramatis personae*

<sup>35</sup> *Works*, II, 24.

<sup>36</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, I, 3.

<sup>37</sup> *Every Man Out of His Humour*, V, 4.

<sup>38</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, IV, 1.

<sup>39</sup> *Every Man in His Humour*, III, 3.

<sup>40</sup> This likeness is especially striking, since the usual justice of pre-Restoration comedy is not a gay old aristocrat, as they both are, but a foolish, ignorant, often henpecked old fellow, not much superior to a constable.

<sup>41</sup> Trice in this particular is not at all like Massinger's character, Greedy, in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*.

as "an old rich humourous lord," shows especially well the influence of Jonson's method. He is not so close to any of Jonson's humours as Trice is to Buffone. The old lord's peculiarity of being excessively credulous, which is his humour, had been represented, it is true, by Jonson — in Stephen of *Every Man in His Humour*, and in Deliro of *Every Man Out of His Humour*, for instance — but Lord Nonsuch is not very much like either of these. Stephen is chiefly interesting, not for his credulity, but for his efforts to imitate Bobadil, and Deliro is a doting husband whose blind confidence in Fallace approaches the proportions of psychological humour. Lord Nonsuch is, on the other hand, a humour of suggestibility, one of the best examples of the personified whim which Dryden used so extensively in this first play. Let us examine his peculiar behavior.

With the help of her cousin, Lady Constance has convinced her father that she is with child. So far as the development of the plot was concerned, this was all that was necessary, since Lady Constance's object — getting permission to marry Loveby — was already assured of success. But Dryden wants to get as much fun as he can out of the situation. First Toby Coachman is brought in, also "with child":

*Nonsuch:* To my best remembrance I never heard of such a thing before.

*Toby:* I never stretch out myself to snap my whip, but it goes to the heart of me.

*Isabelle:* Alas, poor Toby!

*Nonsuch:* Begone, and put off your livery, sirrah! — You shall not stay a minute in my service.

*Toby:* I beseech your good worship, be good to me; 'twas the first fault I ever committed in this kind. I have three poor children by my wife; and if you leave me to the wide world, with a new charge upon myself —

*Nonsuch:* Begone! I will not hear a word.

*Toby:* If I must go, I'll not go alone: Ambrose Tinnis, the cook, is as bad as I am.

*Nonsuch:* I think you'll make me mad. Call the rascal hither! I must account with him on another score, now I think on't.

*(Enter Ambrose Tinnis)*

*Nonsuch:* Sirrah, what made you send a pheasant with one wing to the table yesterday?

*Ambrose:* I beseech your worship to pardon me; I longed for't.

*Isabelle:* I feared as much.

*Ambrose:* And I beseech your worship let me have a boy, to help me in the kitchen; for I find myself unable to go through with the work. Besides, the doctor has warned me of stooping to the fire, for fear of a mischance.

*Nonsuch:* Why, are you with child, sirrah?

*Ambrose:* So he tells me; but, if I were put to my oath, I know not that ever I deserved for't.

*Nonsuch:* Still worse and worse. And here comes Setstone groaning.

*(Enter Setstone)*

*Setstone:* O, sir! I have been so troubled with swooning-fits; and have so longed for cherries!

*Nonsuch:* He's pooped too.

*Isabelle:* Well, this is not the worst yet: I suspect something more than I will speak of.

*Nonsuch:* What dost thou suspect, ha!

*Isabelle:* Is not your lordship with child, too?

*Nonsuch:* Who, I with child! marry, Heaven forbid! What dost thou see by me, to ground it on?

*Isabelle:* You're very round of late; — that's all, sir.

*Nonsuch:* Round! that's only fat, I hope. I have had a very good stomach of late, I'm sure.

*Isabelle:* Alas, and well you may; — You eat for two, sir.

*Nonsuch:* Setstone, look upon me, and tell me true: Do you observe any alteration in me?

*Setstone:* I would not dishearten your ladyship — your lordship, I would say — but I have observed, of late, your colour goes and comes extremely. Methinks your lordship looks very sharp, and bleak i' the face, and mighty puffed i' the body.

*Nonsuch:* O, the devil! Wretched men, that we are all! Nothing grieves me, but that, in my old age, when others are past child-bearing, I should come to be a disgrace to my family.

*Constance:* How do you, sir? Your eyes look wondrous dim. Is not there a mist before 'em?

*Isabelle:* Do you not feel a kicking in your belly? — When do you look [i.e. expect], nuncle?

*Nonsuch:* Uh, uh! — Methinks, I am very sick o' the sudden.

*Isabelle:* What store of old shirts have you against the good time? Shall I give you a shift, nuncle?

*Nonsuch:* Here's like to be a fine charge towards! We shall all be brought to bed together! Well, if I be with devil, I will have such gossips. an usurer, and a scrivener, shall be god-fathers.

*Isabelle:* I'll help you, nuncle; and Sawney's two grannies shall be godmothers. The child shall be christened by the directory; and the gossips' gifts shall be the gude Scotch kivenant.

*Constance, Setstone, Nonsuch, Toby, Ambrose:* Uh! uh. uh <sup>42</sup>

Just as Lord Nonsuch's humour is like the humours of eccentricity in Jonson, so the farce which results from it is in Jonson's manner Bobadil's bravest boasting <sup>43</sup> and Puntarvolo's imitation of medieval romances <sup>44</sup> are examples of how Jonson heaps exaggeration upon exaggeration until the result is the same as in the episode just quoted. The duping of Daw

<sup>42</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, IV, 2.

<sup>43</sup> *Every Man in His Humour*, IV, 5.

<sup>44</sup> *Every Man Out of His Humour*, II, 1; IV, 4.

and LaFoole in Jonson's *Epicæne*, however, is a better example of this. In fact, the spirit of the pregnancy scene, its grossness, the unrestrained gusto with which its opportunities for farce are exploited, and the excesses of its absurdity are all present in this well-known part of Jonson's comedy.<sup>45</sup>

This is not to say that Dryden consciously paralleled this or any other *one* scene in Jonson when he wrote the passage under discussion. Dryden attempted to follow the greater dramatist without slavish imitation. The quotation is an example of one phase of Jonson's *manner* in Dryden and was chosen as an illustration from a number of others in *The Wild Gallant* because it shows Dryden's use of that manner in an episode certainly not derived from Jonson, since the idea for it was apparently taken (and, strangely enough, no one seems to have noticed this before) from the third tale of the ninth day of the *Decameron*.<sup>46</sup>

Bibber, the tailor, is also a humour of eccentricity. He so loves a jest that he spends much of his time in going from tavern to tavern in hopes of hearing a good one. Those whom he considers witty may have their clothes on credit; in fact, Bibber trusts Burr for a suit merely because Burr has made an obvious pun.<sup>47</sup> When Isabelle suggests — not at all subtly

<sup>45</sup> *Epicæne*, IV, 2.

<sup>46</sup> Lord Nonsuch, like Boccaccio's Calandrino, allows the suggestions of those in the plot to convince him that he is pregnant. Toby Coachman, like Calandrino, is told by a doctor that his water shows that he is pregnant. Most important, Lord Nonsuch, like Calandrino, worries about the structural impediments to parturition in a male. See the lines immediately following those I have quoted above in *The Wild Gallant*.

John Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage . . .*, I, 60, points out that the chaplain of Charles II believed that he was pregnant, but does not claim that the chaplain's peculiar behavior influenced Dryden.

<sup>47</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, I, 1. It is important to remember that an element in Bibber's humor is that he loves best the poorest jokes. Those who criticize the dull wit of this play sometimes fail to observe that Dryden often does not intend for us to laugh at the wit of his characters, but at Bibber for valuing this "wit" as he did.

— that Bibber's wife is cuckolding him, he is so much delighted with the "jest" that he whips out his tapeline, falls to his knees, and starts to measure her for a gown on credit,<sup>48</sup> and he is delighted with Loveby's jest on the same subject.<sup>49</sup> When Loveby gives an exaggerated account of the smallness of the room into which Bibber threatens to put him for not paying his bill, Bibber considers it so witty that he at once allows him a rebate.<sup>50</sup> Finally Bibber bails Loveby out of jail for a most pedestrian bit of repartee.<sup>51</sup> Here, contrary to his usual practice, Dryden uses Bibber's humour as a means of advancing the plot.

In comparing Dryden's humours in *The Wild Gallant* with those of Jonson it should be noted how extremely Jonsonian are even the details of the method of presentation. Jonson's great fault was that he often described rather than presented character, and he is here followed even in this. The influence is particularly striking in the short portraits which both dramatists draw of a character before he makes his first entrance. Dryden writes:

*Failer:* Do you not know Will Bibber's humour?

*Burr:* Prythee, what have I to do with his humour?

*Failer:* Break but a jest, and he'll beg to trust thee for a suit; nay, he will contribute to his own destruction, and give thee occasions to make one. . . . Boy, conduct him up.<sup>52</sup>

A few pages farther on he uses the same method much more extensively:

*Failer:* . . . Sir Timorous dines here today: you know him?

*Burr:* Ay, ay, a good honest young fellow; but no conjuror; he and I are very kind.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 2.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 2.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 2.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 1.

*Failer:* Egad, we two have a constant revenue out of him: he would now be admitted suitor to my Lady Constance Non-such. . . . He never saw her before yesterday and will not be brought to speak to her this month yet.

*Burr:* That's strange.

*Failer:* Such a bashful knight did I never see; but we must move for him.

*Bibber:* They say, here's a great dinner to be made today here, at your cousin Trice's, on purpose for the interview.

*Burr:* What, he keeps up his old humour still?

*Failer:* Yes, certain; he admires eating and drinking well, as much as ever, and measures every man's wit by the goodness of his palate.

*Burr:* Who dines here besides?

*Failer:* Jack Loveby.

*Bibber:* O, my guest.

*Burr:* He has ever had the repute of a brave clear-spirited fellow.

*Failer:* He's one of your Dear Hearts, a debauchee.<sup>53</sup>

*Burr:* I love him the better for't . . . . What fortune has he?

*Failer:* Good fortune at all games, but no estate: He had one; but he has made a devil on't long ago. He's a bold fellow, I vow to gad: A person, that keeps company with his betters; and commonly had gold in's pockets. Come, Bibber, I see thou longest to be at thy morning's watering: I'll try what credit I have with the butler.

*Bibber:* Come away, my noble Festus and new customer.

*Failer:* Now will he drink, till his face be no bigger than a three-pence.<sup>54</sup>

This is as undramatic as drama can well be, especially since Burr and Failer are telling each other what they both already

<sup>53</sup> Dryden's failure to make good this promise in the character of Loveby, particularly in the 1663 version of the play, is discussed on pages 39-41.

<sup>54</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, I, 1.

know for the palpable reason that the audience must be informed. But Jonson had done the same thing:

*Well-Bred*: Whither went your master? Thomas, canst thou tell?

*Cash*: I know not; to justice Clement's, I think, sir. . . .

*Edward Kno'well*: Justice Clement! What's he?

*Well-Bred*: Why, dost thou not know him? He is a city-magistrate, a justice here, an excellent good lawyer, and a great scholar; but the only mad, merry old fellow in Europe. I showed him you the other day.

*Edward Kno'well*: Oh, is that he? I remember him now. Good faith, and he ha's a very strange presence, methinks; it shows as if he stood out of the rank from other men: I have heard many of his jests i' the University. They say he will commit a man for taking the wall of his horse.

*Well-Bred*: Ay, or for wearing his cloak of one shoulder, or serving of God: any thing indeed, if it come in the way of his humour.<sup>55</sup>

This is only one of scores of the same kind of character exposition in Jonson's comedies. That Dryden was consciously imitating the device from him cannot be doubted when the following passage in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* is considered:

There is another artifice of the poet [i.e. Jonson], which I cannot here omit, because by the frequent practice of it in his comedies he has left it to us almost as a rule; that is, when he has any character or humour wherein he would show a *coup de Maistre*, or his highest skill, he recommends it to your observation by a pleasant description of it before the person first appears.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>55</sup> *Every Man in His Humour*, III, 2

<sup>56</sup> *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, *Works*, XV, 353 The use of this device later became widespread. The manners school used it often; the first scenes of many comedies of manners are largely taken up with a description of characters who are to appear. See, for instance, *Sir Fopling Flutter*, I, 1; *The Old Bachelor*, I, 1; and *The Way of the World*, I, 1.



In view of the importance of Jonson as a model for *The Wild Gallant* it is surprising to find out that Dryden was very little influenced by the dramatic "sons of Ben." There are, it is true, a few likenesses between the comedy and certain of the plays of Brome, Nabbes, Glapthorne, and their contemporaries that may indicate, now and then, that Dryden was acquainted with them, but one is surprised at how little real proof there is of this acquaintance.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> To show how few traces there are of the sons of Ben in *The Wild Gallant* one need but consider some of their favorite characters. Caroline dramatists have given us at least a dozen justices, but Justice Trice (part of whose character has been shown to come from Jonson) has almost nothing in common with any of them. They are usually married—in contrast with Clement and Trice—and one is chiefly interested in the ascendancy of their wives over them. Justice Ferret of Nabbes' *Bride* (I, 4), for instance, is a good example. Usually, too, they are amusing because of their rusticity or ignorance, as is Justice Clack of Brome's *Jovial Crew* (Act V).

It is true that Justice Squelch of Brome's *Northern Lasse* (IV, 1) has an interest in prostitutes, as does Dryden's Trice, but the difference is distinct; for Trice has the benevolent attitude of an aristocrat toward these companions of gallants, whereas Squelch looks upon them with lust, and is lenient only to the one he wants to keep for his own mistress. The scene in Dryden becomes farce, in Brome it is satire. And this is what often differentiates Dryden in *The Wild Gallant* from the sons of Ben. When they give us humorous characters their purpose is nearly always satirical.

Another example of how Dryden differed in this play from the sons of Ben is shown in the situation between Bibber and his wife. The commonness of this situation is indicated in Nabbes' *Covent-Garden* (II, 6), where Jeffrey tells of a citizen whose wife was kissed by a lord, "upon which he grew so proud of being exalted above the rest of his neighbors, that he would suffer none to Cuckold him ever after but Lords." Mrs. Laymedown of Tatham's *Scotch Figgaries* (Act IV), Josina of Brome's *City Wit* (IV, 3), Alicia of Brome's *Mad Couple Well Matched* (II, 1), and Mrs. Mixum of Glapthorne's *Hollander* (II, 1) are all citizens' wives who are anxious to cuckold their husbands. But it is again surprising to find that Dryden's Mrs. Bibber has little of the appetite for gallants that these women have, and that she is outraged when her husband does not show more interest or anger at the innuendoes of Loveby. In fact, her attitude toward Loveby is surprisingly like that of Win-the-fight Littlewit toward Quarious in *Bartholomew Fair* (I, 1), and when we consider that in the latter play we have in Littlewit the same combination of lack of jealousy and love of wit that Dryden gives us, it seems likely that Dryden was consciously influenced by the characters of Littlewit and his wife when he drew those of Bibber and Francis.

In creating his minor characters, then (and, though there are few of them, their speeches take up a depressingly large part of the play), Dryden passed over the would-be's of Jonson and his sons, and imitated Jonson's unsocialized, farcical humours characters.

#### IV

If we set the three witty characters, Lady Constance, Isabelle, and Loveby, aside for treatment later, it may be worth while to digress for a few moments and to discuss the reason for the crudeness of these Jonsonian humours characters. Dryden has certainly failed to "invade his author like a monarch." Later he is to realize how badly he has done, and in the epilogue to *The Conquest of Granada*, as well as in the *Defence of the Epilogue*, it is the very qualities in Jonson which he had so disastrously copied here that he attacks most severely.<sup>58</sup> He then sees the cheapness of Jonson's puns, which he had imitated in their crudest form in *The Wild Gallant*, and the unfashionableness of his humours, and feels that, instead of repeating such things, writers of comedy should imitate the witty language and quick repartees of gentlemen. In the dedication of *The Assignment* to Sedley, Dryden again expresses this idea,<sup>59</sup> the working out of which accounts in part at least for the superiority of the comedies he wrote between 1667, the year of the second failure of *The Wild Gallant*, and 1672, the year in which *The Assignment* appeared.

Moreover, when one compares *The Wild Gallant* with the witty *Maiden Queen* and realizes that only four years intervened between the two plays, one wonders even more at the

<sup>58</sup> Though he had praised them in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*. This is discussed below.

<sup>59</sup> *Works*, IV, 369-377.

lack of polish of the first play. Even *The Rival-Ladies*, produced in the same year as *The Wild Gallant*, shows a surprising advance, though it is in a genre entirely different from that of the first comedy. How can such a quick improvement be explained?

The explanation seems to be that the improvement was not really sudden, that a part of *The Wild Gallant* was written several years before it was produced, perhaps even carried in manuscript by Dryden when he came to London in 1658.<sup>60</sup>

There are several indications of this. Pope is quoted by Spence<sup>61</sup> as having said, "[Dryden's] *Wild Gallant* was written while he was a boy and is very bad." Now for Pope, whose own youth was over so very early, to say that Dryden was a boy at the time the play was *produced* would have been ridiculous. At that time (1663) Dryden was thirty-one years old, an age at which Pope had written his *Pastorals*, his *Essay on Criticism*, *The Rape of the Lock*, *Windsor Forest*, and a part of his translation of *The Iliad*. Pope, then, must mean that Dryden wrote *The Wild Gallant* several years before it was produced.

The evidence of Spence's quotation of Pope, not conclusive in itself,<sup>62</sup> is supported by Dryden's own statement about the play when it was revived in a slightly altered form four years after its first production. The prologue to the revised play is as follows:

As some raw squire, by tender mother bred,  
'Till one-and-twenty keeps his maidenhead,

<sup>60</sup> In *The Epistle to the Tories*, which accompanies *The Medal of John Bayes*, Shadwell speaks of Dryden "when he came first to Town" as a "young raw fellow of seven and Twenty"

<sup>61</sup> *Spence's Anecdotes*, p. 171.

<sup>62</sup> The rest of Pope's statement, "All his plays are printed in the order in which they were written," may seem more inaccurate than it is until we realize that Pope was undoubtedly referring to Tonson's folios of 1701 or to Congreve's edition.

(Pleased with some sport, which he alone does find,  
And thinks a secret to all human kind,)  
'Till mightily in love, yet half afraid,  
He first attempts the gentle dairy maid:  
Succeeding there, and, led by the renown  
Of Whetstone's Park,<sup>63</sup> he comes at length to town;  
Where entered, by some school-fellow or friend,  
He grows to break glass-windows in the end:  
His valour too, which with the watch began,  
Proceeds to duel, and he kills his man.  
By such degrees, while knowledge he did want,  
Our unfledged author writ a Wild Gallant. . . .

There are a few more lines, which refer to the changes Dryden made in the play between 1663 and 1667 and which will be discussed later, but the part given here throws light on the play as it first appeared. It indicates that Dryden wrote the play, not all at once just previous to its publication, but "by degrees," over a period of time. When he began the play, we are told, he was very unsophisticated; when he finished it his education was partly, though not altogether, complete. One is tempted to go farther and to find exact parallels for each of the steps in the allegory<sup>64</sup> — to suggest that Dryden is saying that he began the play as a "raw squire" in the country and brought it with him when he came to town. But Dryden may have meant the education of the raw squire to apply only in a general way to his own case; and this is all that is necessary to my thesis. The important point is that Dryden says that he wrote the play *during a period* of increasing knowledge, that he was wiser in the ways of the world when he finished it than he had been when he began it.

<sup>63</sup> Whetstone's Park was not a park in the usual sense, but a street famous for its brothels, according to a note by Noyes in his edition of *Dryden's Poetical Works*, p. 941.

<sup>64</sup> In other prologues Dryden did carry figures of speech to astonishing lengths, for instance, in the prologue to *The Mock Astrologer*.

This explains not only the inartistic nature of some of the comedy, but also the surprising excellence of other parts. As he wrote the play *by degrees* he learned more and more about the theater and about the tastes of Restoration audiences. One guesses, naturally, that those parts of *The Wild Gallant* which have already been discussed here, even the comparatively effective passages, were the parts Dryden wrote first, perhaps while he was still at Cambridge,<sup>65</sup> where Jonson was acclaimed and read more than any other English dramatist. Jonson's careful working out of dramatic technique and his scholarly discussion of it, which has already been mentioned, would naturally attract an inexperienced student; and such a student might be expected to prefer the very portions of Jonson that Dryden has followed.<sup>66</sup> Then some six or seven years later, perhaps, after he had moved to London and become acquainted with the Court, after he had had an opportunity to notice which parts of Beaumont and Fletcher and Shirley it was that the Restoration audiences preferred, we may suppose him to have added or to have rewritten the scenes in which Lady Constance, Madam Isabelle, and Mr. Loveby parade their wit.

If this is true it explains why the character of Loveby is of such varying excellence as it is. He appears largely in the

<sup>65</sup> If the allegory is intended to have a close application, the "tender mother" may, of course, be Cambridge.

<sup>66</sup> The fact that Dryden still praised Jonson's humours of eccentricity in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (*Works*, XV, 349-351) does not disprove my conjecture. I am not claiming that Dryden underwent a complete revolution in taste between the time when he began the play and when he finished it. Obviously he would have rewritten the first part had this been so. What I do claim is that certain characters in the play show more maturity and more social experience in the author than others do and that, since Dryden says that he wrote the play *by degrees*, part as a "rude squire" and part as a young man just come to town, the poorer Jonsonian portion should be assigned to the squire, the more sophisticated part to the town dweller. And, though Dryden has not yet turned against Jonson's humours in the *Essay*, he there praises Jonson's true wits more highly.

"early" parts of the comedy and suffers thereby. When he does enter into the "later" parts he is another person. To be more specific, Loveby is extremely tiresome when he is making puns for the delight of "little Bibber";<sup>67</sup> he becomes brilliant in his wit combats with Lady Constance.<sup>68</sup> Burr and Failer, too, become quite different when they are speaking with Madam Isabelle from what they are in the earlier part of the play. In the first scene they are on the level of Bibber; later, they show flashes of wit. Isabelle and Lady Constance, since they reveal little of this inequality, were not created, one may guess, until the later portions took form.

V

Up to this point the Jonsonian influence in *The Wild Gallant* has been discussed, and it has been shown that the mention of Jonson in the prologue was not merely a device for buying the favor of the critics. Next, since the characters which show Jonsonian influence are crudely drawn and since they are of a kind not calculated to please Restoration taste, the theory has been advanced by me that they make up the portion of the play which Dryden wrote earliest, perhaps before he came to London. The truth or falsity of this theory is important, for, if true, it indicates that Dryden's lack of

<sup>67</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, I, 2. Miss Lynch notes (*op cit*, p. 133) that "He [Loveby] practises one rule of manners with his tavern companions and another with Constance," but she does not explain it.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1. Others of Dryden's plays were or may have been written "by degrees." *The Duke of Guise*, first begun in 1660, was not produced until 1682. The existence of the long unused heroic couplets in Dryden's last drama, *Love Triumphant*, may mean that those parts of the play in which they occur had been written during his heroic period. He may often have kept manuscripts by him and have passed them about among his friends for suggestions for revision. In the dedication to *The Rival Ladies* he says to Orrery (*Works*, II, 131) "You have been pleased, my lord, they [his writings] should sometimes cross the Irish seas, to kiss your hands."

sympathy with the comedy of humours which he expressed so decidedly in his *Defence of the Epilogue* in 1672 may have begun much earlier. In the comedies of his greatest period (1667-72) he does not use Jonsonian humours again, except for one character, Moody, in *Sir Martin Mar-all*,<sup>69</sup> and, though he continues to praise them in his criticism, that is, in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, even there his preference for witty characters indicates the trend that the later portions of *The Wild Gallant* had already revealed.<sup>70</sup>

## VI

Too much space has, perhaps, been devoted to the cruder sections of *The Wild Gallant*. The more interesting part, that in which the characters of Loveby, Lady Constance, and Isabelle appear together, is now to be discussed. A search for the sources of these characters will reveal what dramatists were to be Dryden's models in his subsequent comedies, since it has been indicated that with slight exceptions he was through with Jonsonian humours

But the search should reveal more. It should settle the question how far it is true that *The Wild Gallant* is the first comedy of manners.<sup>71</sup> Should the comedy be shown to be entirely in the tradition of Jonson or of the sons of Ben or of

<sup>69</sup> See pp 217-219. He uses humours again in *Mr Limberham*, of course, as is shown below in the discussion of that play. *Mr Limberham*, however, is certainly not included in his greatest period for comedy, for *Marriage à la Mode* closed this period.

<sup>70</sup> See p 24, n 66.

<sup>71</sup> Krutch *op cit*, p 15, "if we could be sure that the revision were not material [see p 27, n 73], then to Dryden could surely be given the credit for having first seized completely the essentials of the coming tradition."

Montague Summers, Introduction to *The Adventures of Five Hours*, ed. B. Van Thal, p xi, calls *The Wild Gallant*, "if not actually the first comedy of manners at any rate a progenitor of that particular type, which received a very definite form in Etherege, and was to attain perfection in William Congreve."

Beaumont and Fletcher or of Shirley, should its manners elements turn out to be, as Miss Lynch and Wilson have claimed,<sup>72</sup> nothing more than what had already been used by those pre-Restoration dramatists, it obviously should not be called the first comedy of manners, or even an important step toward that genre. On the other hand, should it prove to have new manners elements or to be a significantly new combination of the manners elements already anticipated, it will have to be recognized as at least a step forward.<sup>73</sup>

In order that it may be clear by what standard comedy of manners wits are to be judged, perhaps Nicoll's definition will be useful. He says <sup>74</sup> that a comedy of manners is distinguished by

. . . the presence of at least one pair of witty lovers, the woman as emancipated as the man, their dialogue free and graceful, an air of refined cynicism over the whole production, the plot of less consequence than the wit, an absence of crude realism, a total lack of any emotion whatsoever.

<sup>72</sup> Lynch, *op cit*, J H Wilson, *The Influence of Beaumont and Fletcher on Restoration Drama*

<sup>73</sup> As Krutch suggested (see p 26, n 71), it is important to decide whether or not the changes made when *The Wild Gallant* was revived in 1667 were extensive, since we have the play only in the later form. If most of the manners elements were added during this revision, Dryden is obviously much less of a pioneer than he would be had he written them in 1663. It seems probable, however, that the 1667 additions were not extensive. In the prologue to the revival, part of which has been quoted, Dryden speaks of but one change, the addition of "three wenches more" to bring Loveby's morals "up" to the standard of Restoration gentlemen. Except for this change, to which he calls attention, Dryden apologizes for the rest of the play as the production of his youth, an excuse for the comedy's limitations which, if the alterations had been considerable, would have been recognized as false by those who had seen the play before. Besides, it does not seem likely that Dryden gave much time to the rewriting of *The Wild Gallant* for its production in 1667, for in that same year he produced three other plays, *The Maiden Queen*, *Sir Martin Mar-all*, and *The Tempest*. Miss Lynch, Nicoll, Summers, and others who have pointed out the comedy's manners characteristics (Krutch, only, excepted) have tacitly taken this view of the matter.

<sup>74</sup> *Op cit*, p. 185.



With this definition in mind, let us compare the witty characters of *The Wild Gallant* with the heroes and the heroines of Dryden's predecessors.

In view of Dryden's reference to Fletcher in the prologue <sup>75</sup> and his later praise of him in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* <sup>76</sup> it seems very likely that Dryden might have turned to Beaumont and Fletcher for suggestions. Some of the elements of *The Wild Gallant* which are most in the manners vein might, indeed, have come from them, for they have been recognized as having contributed a great deal to the most unassailable masterpieces of the comedy of manners. Such rakes and witty ladies as those in *Wit at Several Weapons*, *Wit without Money*, *The Scornful Lady*, *The Wild Goose Chase*, and *The Chances*, in their sophisticated, antimoral attitude especially revealed in a lack of respect for marriage, their cynical frankness about sex in general, and their love of wit, have already been shown by critics to have given particularly noteworthy hints to Restoration dramatists.<sup>77</sup> It is not surprising, then, to find many reminiscences of these plays in *The Wild Gallant*. Their influence is not so direct and obvious as that of Jonson on Dryden's humours, and it cannot be so satisfactorily demonstrated; but it can at least be shown that Dryden was not breaking altogether new ground when he invented the witty characters of his first play.

Lady Constance's and Isabelle's lack of retiring qualities, their willingness to woo as well as to be wooed, is a trait found in Beaumont and Fletcher's heroines. The Lady Hartwell and her sister of *Wit without Money*, Oriana and her three witty companions of *The Wild Goose Chase*, and the lady of *The Scornful Lady* all show no embarrassment in going after

<sup>75</sup> " those, that boast their own estate,  
Forget Fletcher and Ben before them went "

<sup>76</sup> *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, *Works*, XV, 345-346.

<sup>77</sup> Lynch, *op cit*, pp. 19-23. Wilson, *op cit*, Chapter IV.

their men. Then, too, Loveby's response to the advances of his mistress is not very different from that of Valentine in *Wit without Money*,<sup>78</sup> though Dryden's hero is much less wild than are most of Beaumont and Fletcher's rakes. The wit combats in *The Wild Gallant*<sup>79</sup> are rather strikingly in the Restoration vein, but when they are compared with certain passages in Beaumont and Fletcher<sup>80</sup> it is easy to see that they are in the older tradition as well as in the new one.

<sup>78</sup> Wilson (*op cit*, p 78) seems to think that there is evidence of definite borrowings in *The Wild Gallant* from *Wit without Money* and *Wit at Several Weapons*. He cites II, 4, of the first play as a parallel to Lady Constance's giving money to Loveby (whom he insists on calling "Loveall"), but the parallel is not a close one, not nearly so close as the one in Shirley's *Lady of Pleasure*, which I cite below (p 34). Wilson's comparison of the capture of Sir Timorous by Isabelle with that of Sir Gregory Fop by Mirabel in *Wit at Several Weapons* (Acts IV and V) is no more convincing, though it might be if Sir Timorous of Dryden's play were really a "wealthy fop," as Wilson calls him. In reality, Sir Timorous is little more than his name implies, an easily frightened man, and his foolishness has little pretense and almost no social affectation in it, as Sir Gregory's has. Sir Timorous is much more like Sir Timothy Shallowit of Glapthorne's *Wit in a Constable* than he is like Sir Gregory Shallowit says (IV, 1).

" . . . I me such a fearefull foole I cannot speake,  
If any body looke on me "

And Sir Timorous likewise loses his tongue under the eye of his mistress. See also Wilson's mistake (p 126, n 144) about the source of *The Spanish Friar*.

<sup>79</sup> II, 1, III, 1, IV, 1

<sup>80</sup> For instance, the following wit combat from III, 1, of *The Wild Goose Chase*

" *Mirabel*

Bless ye, sweet beauties, sweet incomparable ladies,  
Sweet wits, sweet humours! bless you, learnèd lady!  
And you, most holy nun, bless your devotions!

" *Lilla Bianca*

And bless your brains, sir, your most pregnant brains, sir!  
They are in travail, may they be deliver'd  
Of a most hopeful wild-geese!

" *Rosalura*

Bless your manhood!  
They say you are a gentleman of action,  
A fair accomplish'd man, and a rare engineer;  
You have a rare trick to blow up maidenheads,  
A subtle trick, they say abroad

Isabelle's frankness and "advanced" opinions about chastity show, too, a sophistication that might be thought to be typical only of Restoration comedy, since it is so notably found there, if it were not also strikingly present in Beaumont and Fletcher. Isabelle observes, for instance, that Lady Constance should not think the less of Loveby because he has revealed an acquaintance with prostitutes:

The worst you can say of . . . [Loveby] is, he loves women: and such make the kindest husbands, I'm told. If you had a sum of money to put out, you would not look so much whether the man were an honest man, (for the law would make him that) as if he were a good sufficient paymaster.<sup>81</sup>

This attitude can easily be paralleled in half a dozen of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher. The likeness is perhaps best shown in the following quotation:

*Rosalura*: They say, he is a wench too.

*Lillia Bianca* I like him better,  
A free light touch or two becomes a gentleman,  
And sets him seemly off so he exceed not,  
But keep his compass clear, he may be look'd at.  
I would not marry a man that must be taught,  
And conjur'd up with kisses: the best game  
Is play'd still by the best gamesters.<sup>82</sup>

In spite of many resemblances of this kind which *The Wild Gallant* has to Beaumont and Fletcher's comedies, it is obvi-

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" *Mirabel*  
I have, lady.

" *Rosalura*  
And often glory in their ruins.

" *Mirabel*  
Yes, forsooth,  
I have a speedy trick, please you to try it;  
My engine will despatch you instantly."

<sup>81</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, IV, 2

<sup>82</sup> *The Wild Goose Chase*, III, 1.

ous that Dryden's play marks an advance. In the first place, Dryden has taken elements in the manners vein from several of Beaumont and Fletcher's comedies and has combined them. No one of the earlier plays has nearly the manners atmosphere—the "air of refined cynicism"—that the non-Jonsonian parts of *The Wild Gallant* have.

In *The Wild Goose Chase*, for instance, the men are wild enough and the women witty enough for a time, but they undergo sudden and unconvincing changes in order that the plot may come out as the authors want it to.<sup>83</sup> For the dramatists were more interested in producing a series of effective scenes than they were in representing character or in making their heroes and heroines comply with any such fixed standard of etiquette as governs the Restoration *beau monde*.<sup>84</sup> Even in *Wit without Money* the plot is seen to be of more importance than the study of the manners of Valentine and Lady Hartwell and their group, an objection which could never be urged against the part of *The Wild Gallant* under discussion, where the importance of wit and social pose is never lost sight of and the plot is of so little importance that Isabelle airily urges Lord Nonsuch to assent to her cousin's wedding as follows:

Come, nuncle, 'tis in vain to hold out, now 'tis past remedy:  
'Tis like the last act of a play, when people must marry, and if  
fathers will not consent then, they should throw oranges at them  
from the galleries. Why should you stand off, to keep us from a  
dance? <sup>85</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Nicoll (*op cit*, p 170), however, feels that *The Wild Goose Chase* is nearest the Restoration ideal of all of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays

<sup>84</sup> Lynch, *op cit*, pp 20-24 These pages have been of great help in what follows

<sup>85</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, V, 3 A refined lack of emotion may be simulated by Beaumont and Fletcher's characters at times, but it is not sustained Even the heroine of *The Scornful Lady*, though she is able to hide her love for the Elder Loveless in some scenes, reveals it in others in a way that is fatal to the manners



*Loveby*: Not for that neither; but I had many other kindred, whom she might have left it to; only she heard I lived here in fashion and spent my money in the eye of the world.

*Constance*: You forge these things prettily; but I have heard you are as poor as a decimated cavalier, and had not one foot of land in all the world.

*Loveby*: Rivals' tales, rivals' tales, madam.

*Constance*: Where lies your land, sir?

*Loveby*: I'll tell you, madam, it has upon it a very fair manor-house; from one side you have in prospect an hanging garden.

*Isabelle*: Who was hanged there? not your grandmother, I hope?

*Loveby*: In the midst of it you have a fountain. You have seen that at Hampton-court? it will serve to give you a slight image of it. Beyond the garden you look to a river through a perspective of fruit-trees; and beyond the river you see a mead so flowery!<sup>86</sup> — Well, I shall never be at quiet, till we two make hay there.<sup>87</sup>

Dryden, then, has some absolute advantages over Beaumont and Fletcher, but it is by what he omitted as well as by what he took that he passes beyond them toward the comedy of manners. Perhaps by taking a scene here and a scene there

<sup>86</sup> It seems possible that this is a description of the garden and park of Nonsuch House, a place of retirement in Surrey just outside London built by Henry VIII. It fell into disrepair and was despoiled by Cromwell's men, but was reconditioned and used by Charles after the Restoration. Dryden's having named his heroine's father Lord Nonsuch suggests that he was acquainted with the place. "A Survey of Nonsuch House and Park, *cum pertinentiis*, Anno Domini 1650," taken from the original in the Augmentation Office and printed in *Archaeologia*, V (1779), 429-439, indicates that the garden (not a hanging garden, of course), the fountain, the fruit trees, and the mead were all present in the surroundings of Nonsuch House. Pepys describes the house and park (*op cit.*, July 26, 1663, and Sept. 21, 1665), as does Evelyn (*op cit.*, January 3, 1665-66). In 1670 when King Charles, tired of the Countess of Castlemaine, dismissed her, he gave her the property and added the title of Baroness of Nonsuch to her other titles. This last, of course, is of no significance unless it is an indication that Lady Castlemaine liked Nonsuch Castle especially, in which case it may be that Dryden gave this description of the garden, if it is such, to please her.

<sup>87</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, II, 1.

from the several comedies of the two earlier dramatists a better comedy of manners than *The Wild Gallant* could be assembled. But no one of them equals it. Dryden deserves credit, then, as Miss Lynch has said,<sup>88</sup> because he "renews and amplifies with animation and charm the best features" not only of Beaumont and Fletcher, but of others of his predecessors.<sup>89</sup>

Of these other predecessors Shirley is the most important. To begin with, it is interesting to discover that Dryden made one direct borrowing from Shirley. The suggestion for Lady Constance's providing Loveby with money<sup>90</sup> came from *The Lady of Pleasure*<sup>91</sup>. There is not much doubt that this is the source for the incident. It is far nearer than the scene from *Wit without Money*, mentioned above<sup>92</sup> as having been cited by Wilson as the source. Kickshaw of Shirley's comedy believes, like Loveby, that the money which is being given him comes from the devil. Lady Bornwell, who furnishes the money in the manner of Dryden's Lady Constance, though for a more immediate return, tests her lover, as does Lady Constance, by asking him where he gets it. Both gallants, to prove how kind the devil has been, present their mistresses with a jewel and promise more, but both finally fail to get the money they expect.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>88</sup> *Op cit*, p. 136.

<sup>89</sup> Dryden seems to have made little use of particular characters or incidents from Beaumont and Fletcher, that is, there are apparently no borrowings as direct as that of Justice Trice's solo game of backgammon from the solo drinking of Carlo Buffone, mentioned above. Even Wilson, whose thesis is that the two dramatists had a great deal of influence on Restoration drama, has been extremely doubtful about the importance of their work on Dryden's later comedies. Except for the two episodes which he thinks — wrongly, I believe — that Dryden took over for use in *The Wild Gallant* (see p. 29, n. 78), the only thing in Dryden's plays which he feels is certainly from the pages of Beaumont and Fletcher is an incident in *The Rival-Ladies* (*op cit*, p. 63).

<sup>90</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, I, 2

<sup>91</sup> IV, 1, V, 1

<sup>92</sup> P. 29, n. 78

<sup>93</sup> For a further indication that Dryden was acquainted with Shirley's work

After noting this one bit of concrete evidence indicating that Dryden was influenced by Shirley, one is not surprised to discover many evidences of a more general influence. As in Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, so in Shirley's Dryden found a great deal that he could use, but he showed his understanding of Restoration taste by choosing from the right things in Shirley and ignoring the wrong things, and therefore in some respects made an advance toward the comedy of manners.

Shirley anticipates the comedy of manners in several important ways: (1) His satirical attitude, fatal for the most part to the manners atmosphere, disposes him to create humours of social affectation, which are to be given a large place in the comedies of Wycherley and Congreve; (2) He selects certain incidents and characters from those of his predecessors and molds them into a pattern which is to become the typical plot of Restoration comedy, (3) Shirley's witty ladies do not lose their initiative, as did those of Beaumont and Fletcher, in order to assist the working out of the plot, and they are not subservient to the men; (4) The dialogue which Shirley develops from the encounter of his gallants and ladies is sustained in his best plays at a high and spirited level that had not been achieved before and was not to be achieved

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see page 105, note 89, where a probable borrowing from Shirley's *Lady of Pleasure* for *Marriage à la Mode* is referred to

The reason this borrowing has not been noticed by critics before is, perhaps, that Dryden later became rather contemptuous of Shirley when he mentioned him in *Mac Flecknoe*. There he says of Shadwell (ll 29-30):

"Heywood and Shirley were but types of thee  
Thou last great prophet of tautology,"

and farther on (ll 102-103)

"Much Heywood, Shirley, Ogleby, there lay,  
But loads of Shadwell almost choked the way"

Critics who because of these lines neglect to look into Shirley's plays for evidence of his influence on Dryden forget Dryden's tendency to turn against his early literary loves.



again until the great Restoration comedies of manners were written. Though the witty combatants of his dramas are less wicked than are those of Beaumont and Fletcher, they play the social game in more sustained fashion than those of any of Shirley's predecessors had done.

In the first of these anticipations which Shirley made of the comedy of manners, the would-be's, Dryden did not follow Shirley, but in the three others he fell willingly and more or less successfully into line. Shirley's plots, mentioned second above, and the influence of their form on Dryden need only be pointed to. *Love in a Maze* and *The Witty Fair One*, in which occur the pursuit of the men by the women, the use of masked marriages to dupe the foolish gallants, and the general marrying of all the characters at the end, furnish the formula for *The Wild Gallant*, as for many later Restoration comedies.

Shirley's witty ladies, to take up the third point, must have been especially stimulating to Dryden. In initiative Lady Constance and Isabelle seem particularly like the best of them, Carol of *Hyde Park*, Penelope of *The Witty Fair One*, and Celestina of *The Lady of Pleasure*. In this quality Shirley's women nearly all excel, but the ones mentioned are furthest ahead of Beaumont and Fletcher's heroines and most like those of the Restoration comedy of manners. The animation of Carol and Penelope is especially to be noted.

I have dwelt on this animation of Shirley's ladies because Dryden must have been influenced by them when he produced Lady Constance and Isabelle. In Shirley's plays, however, the ladies' wit cannot be considered apart from that of their male antagonists. Though Shirley's ladies are more vivacious than his men, they are not much superior to them in intellect; Fairfield is as necessary as Carol to the effect which Shirley produces.

But the same thing is not true of *The Wild Gallant*. As

has been said, Dryden's ladies are as good as Shirley's, but Loveby rarely holds up his end as well as do Fairfield and Fowler, for Loveby is inferior to Lady Constance and Isabelle in intelligence. In his best scenes, such as the one quoted from above,<sup>94</sup> Dryden enables Loveby to overcome this limitation, but too often he allows him to be tongue-tied in situations in which Shirley's men would be voluble and clever. It is not until *The Maiden Queen* that Dryden produces a gallant to match his wits with his mistress' as well as the best of Shirley's gallants had done.

In *The Wild Gallant*, then, Dryden is able to achieve the spirit of manners repartee less sustainedly well than Shirley had done. But in other ways Dryden improves on Shirley. In the first place, he omits Shirley's serious satire. He does not make the mistake, a mistake for one writing a comedy of manners, at least, of presenting vice and treating it as vice — as Shirley sometimes does. Dryden treats it as folly and foible. Moreover, Dryden writes in colloquial prose and thus avoids one of Shirley's worst faults, that of allowing the blank verse of his witty characters to sound at times rhetorical and poetic instead of sprightly. All in all, Dryden's play is more completely in the manners vein than is any of Shirley's.

In the foregoing discussion I have attempted to cover what I feel are the most important influences on Dryden's first comedy. The humours characters were strongly influenced by Jonson. The witty characters, however, were not influenced by him or by his dramatic sons,<sup>95</sup> but by Beaumont and Fletcher and Shirley.

<sup>94</sup> Pp 32-33

<sup>95</sup> Brome's *Sparagus Garden* (V, 12), however, deserves especial notice, since it may possibly be the source for Lady Constance's device (*The Wild Gallant*, IV, 2) of filling out her dress with a cushion in order to convince her father that she is pregnant, though of course the device is found elsewhere, perhaps most notably in *Lysistrata*, where a helmet is used. Dryden makes a great advance beyond Brome, so far as the wit of the scene is concerned.

## VII

Though, as has been indicated, the three wits of the play, Loveby, Lady Constance, and Isabelle, have caused late writers on the comedy of manners to place *The Wild Gallant* in that genre, or at the very threshold of it, and, though data have been given in support of this classification, it is easily seen that this first comedy of Dryden is far from a full-fledged comedy of manners. This is partly due to the lack of sophistication evidenced in the Jonsonian humours of the play, which, though they are not important in the development of the plot, take up a large portion of the playing time. If it is true that part of *The Wild Gallant* had been written before Dryden came to London, the presence of these machine-like characters is not surprising, but since they are in the play they still present an embarrassing impediment to its being considered the first comedy of manners, or as important an advance toward that type as Montague Summers and Krutch imply.<sup>96</sup>

But the presence of farcical Jonsonian humours — Bibber, Burr, Failer, Trice, and Lord Nonsuch — is not the only reason for denying the play a place in the canon. Just as important is its lack of would-be wits, usually, though not invariably, found in the comedy of manners. In leaving them out of his comedy Dryden is even behind his predecessors in foreshadowing the Restoration comedy of manners. Jonson, to illustrate more fully than has been done before, has given us many of those affected "intruders on the social scene" who "attempt

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The cleverness and the secret gaiety of Lady Constance and Isabelle are in striking contrast to the reserve of Brome's heroine Annabelle, who speaks during the scene in monosyllables only.

<sup>96</sup> See p. 26, n. 71.

to imitate without being able to interpret " " the true wits about them and whom Palmer<sup>98</sup> and Miss Lynch<sup>99</sup> consider such an important element in the comedy of manners. Jonson gave us among others Stephen and Matthew of *Every Man in His Humour*, Fungoso and Fastidious Brisk of *Every Man Out of His Humour*, and Sir John Daw, Amorous LaFoole, and the collegiate ladies of *Epicæne* — and would-be's swarm in the plays of Brome and of the other dramatic sons of Ben and especially of Shirley. Dryden has given us *no* real affectations of gentility in his first comedy.<sup>100</sup>

The presence of Jonsonian humours of farcical eccentricity and the absence of would-be's in Dryden's first play must, then, be taken into consideration before classifying it with *Sir Fopling Flutter* and *The Way of the World*. But this is not all. Even Loveby is far from the standard of the gentlemen of these comedies. As has already been said, the scenes in which he converses with Bibber are so much below those

<sup>97</sup> Lynch, *op cit*, p. 37

<sup>98</sup> John Palmer, *The Comedy of Manners* (London, 1913), p. 86

<sup>99</sup> *Op cit*, p. 7

<sup>100</sup> It is true that there are crude and undeveloped suggestions of social pretense in the characters of Burr and Failer. They call each other "Dear Heart," evidently an appellation used by gallants, and when they fight for the favor of Isabelle, not like gallants, with the sword, but with kicks (II, 1), some satire is probably intended. Sir Timorous, too, though, as has been said, he is not a would be in most of the play, shows something of the pretension of being a gallant when he refuses to admit that he is a suitor for Lady Constance's hand, adding that he hopes she won't believe all reports that are raised on men of quality (I, 1). But except for such embryonic pretensions the characters of *The Wild Gallant* do not affect the manners of those in a social class above them, in fact, they are not carefully stratified into social classes. Burr, Failer, and Sir Timorous are made to seem ridiculous because they are less able plotters than is Isabelle, not because they attempt to imitate Loveby.

It is worth noticing, perhaps, that the "three wenches" who fail miserably to pretend that they are ladies (IV, 1) were added to the play in 1667. Mrs. Bibber, as has been observed, is obviously on a lower social plane than is Madam Isabelle, and she has a bourgeois desire for a position at Court, but she does not affect the manners or language of a Court lady.

in which he tilts with Lady Constance that it seems probable that they were written during the early part of the period of composition. It is significant that it was one of those scenes with Bibber that Buckingham ridiculed in *The Rehearsal*:

*Bayes*: This Scene will make you die with laughing . . . (*Reads*)  
 "Enter Prince Pretty-man, and Tom Thimble his Taylor."  
 Thus, Sirs, might properly enough be call'd a prize of Wit;  
 for you shall see 'em come in upon one another snip snap, hit  
 for hit, as fast as can be. First one speaks, then presently  
 t'other's upon him slap, with a Repartee; then he at him  
 again, dash with a new conceit: and so eternally, eternally,  
 i'gad, till they go quite off the Stage.<sup>101</sup>

And even in his better scenes Loveby is a pretty poor Restoration rake. So inadequately does he live up to the title of the play that Pepys, after having seen the comedy at Court, complained that he was unable to tell which character was the Wild Gallant,<sup>102</sup> and Dryden himself, realizing his fault, asked pardon for Loveby's "want of wickedness"<sup>103</sup> and "played him at three wenches more"<sup>104</sup> in the 1667 revision. Indeed, measured by the heroes of Wycherley and Congreve, Loveby is almost a Galahad in morals. One realizes how far short of the manners standard of wickedness he falls when one recalls the magnificent proportions of Horner's sexual depravity, Valentine's and Mirabel's callous libertinism, and, to illustrate from a virtual comedy of manners not always recognized as such, the enterprise in debauchery of the two heroes of Shadwell's *Epsom Wells*, Raines and Bevil, who leave hardly a woman in the cast of characters unseduced. Even Loveby's speeches against marriage are not much of a step forward in the development of the manners attitude; they can

<sup>101</sup> *The Rehearsal*, III, 1

<sup>102</sup> *Op cit*, February 23, 1663.

<sup>103</sup> Prologue to *The Wild Gallant*, *Reviv'd*.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

be paralleled by the tirades of True-Wit in *Epicæne*<sup>105</sup> and of Quarlous in *Bartholomew Fair*.<sup>106</sup>

In fact, Nicoll seems to have done justice to *The Wild Gallant* when he says, with much more moderation than Summers and Krutch use, that we find in the comedy "a more distinct tendency [than in earlier plays] towards the later manners school. . . ." <sup>107</sup>

### VIII

Even though the larger part of *The Wild Gallant* is not in the manners vein, the fact that those characters of it which are in this vein, Lady Constance, Isabelle, and, with reservations, Loveby, are the ones who appear very little changed in several of Dryden's subsequent comedies, shows that Dryden judged his work much as we do. In view of the importance of these young lovers — as Celadon and Florimel in *The Maiden Queen*, Wildblood and Jacintha in *The Mock Astrologer*, and Rhodophil and Doralice in *Marriage à la Mode* — it is interesting to consider what were the contemporary influences which made them so much of an advance over the witty lovers of pre-Restoration comedy.

Nicoll thinks that they were suggested by Hart and Nell Gwyn,<sup>108</sup> and this idea is not only attractive but likely, particularly in view of the probability that the description of the masked Florimel in the second scene of *The Maiden Queen* is, as Saintsbury observes,<sup>109</sup> an accurate description of Nell herself.<sup>110</sup> If, however, we agree with what Nicoll has said a few

<sup>105</sup> II, 2

<sup>106</sup> I, 1

<sup>107</sup> *Op cit*, p 182

<sup>108</sup> *Op cit*, p 214

<sup>109</sup> *Works*, II, 416

<sup>110</sup> See Chapter III, p. 98. Dryden seems to have been particularly conscious of the presence of Nell Gwyn in the company. Several of his prologues and epilogues were written to be spoken by her. Moreover, the theory that

lines earlier, that Loveby and Lady Constance are the first examples of this "witty, gay, anti-moral" pair, we must object that Nell at least cannot have been a model for Lady Constance, since she was only twelve years old at the time of the production of *The Wild Gallant* and had not yet joined the King's Company.

Even though this were not so, it would be probable that Dryden's suggestion for his witty lovers did not come from any one source — even those elements in them which were characteristically contemporary and in advance of anything done in earlier comedy.<sup>111</sup> Almost no literary craftsman draws

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certain comic parts were written especially for her is somewhat strengthened by the fact that when Dryden gave her a serious part in *Tyrannic Love* he showed by the epilogue he had her speak that he felt it was ridiculous for her to have such a part. In that epilogue she says.

"To tell you true, I walk, because I die  
Out of my calling in a tragedy  
O poet, damn'd dull poet, who could prove  
So senseless, to make Nelly die for love!"

<sup>111</sup> The possibility of Dryden's having been influenced by the comedies which were on the boards between 1660 and the appearance of *The Wild Gallant* should be considered. Revivals have already been treated, but what about the new plays? They seem to have had little effect on Dryden. He refers to some of them in the prologue, for example, Tuke's *Adventures of Five Hours* and *The Siege of Rhodes* ("a dance of three hours long"), and it is possible that when Dryden says he finds that his audience loves "mistakes" (prologue) he is referring to those of Teague in Sir Robert Howard's *Committee* (see Edmund Malone's *Life of Dryden* in his edition of *The Critical and Miscellaneous Prose Works of John Dryden* . . . I, 54 n). But the first two of these plays are cited as the kind of thing Dryden is *not* doing in his play, and the third, with its sustained satire of puritanism, is nothing like *The Wild Gallant*. Cowley's *Cutter of Coleman Street* deserves especial notice, since Lamb regarded it as "a link between the Comedy of Fletcher and Congreve" (*The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb* [London, 1903-5], IV, 432). But, though Lamb had reason for his statement (Lynch, *op cit*, pp. 99-100), it is in the character of the would-be Puny that Cowley points the way to the comedy of manners, and it has been shown that Dryden has no would-be's in *The Wild Gallant*. It should be observed, however, that the rudimentary trace of affectation in the characters of Burr and Failer in the first scene of Dryden's play, which consists of a love of similitudes, might have been suggested by Puny, whose speech is made up of little else. Aside

from one well of inspiration alone; almost all characters (dramatists say when questioned about their work) are composite characters.

An important determining influence at least on the witty lovers of this first play of Dryden's may, however, be supposed to be the king and his mistress, the Countess of Castlemaine. Dryden tells us that the play "was received at court and was more than once the divertisement of his Majesty" <sup>112</sup> and that, a failure at first, it was given new life by the applause and favor of the Countess. <sup>113</sup> Many critics have observed that the general immorality of the Court resulted in Restoration comedy's being immoral. But it is possible that this more specific and individual influence may be revealed in this comedy, an influence comparable to, though ludicrously different from, that of Elizabeth on such comedies of her reign as Lyly's *Endymion* and Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. It is interesting at least to notice what elements in the witty characters of the comedy would have been especially pleasing to Charles and his famous mistress.

Loveby is in some ways surprisingly like Charles, and like

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from the character of Puny, Cowley's comedy is even less like Dryden's. *Cutter of Coleman Street* is, indeed, not much of a comedy of manners except for its would-be's; and the pathetic words of Lucia when Truman deserts her (IV, 2), as well as the conversation about marriage between Aurelia and Truman (IV, 8), are in the vein of romantic or sentimental comedy rather than in that of the comedy of manners.

The gallants of Killigrew's *Parson's Wedding*, Careless, Wild, and the Captain, seem much more "modern" in their attitude toward love and marriage than Loveby is, as has been said, but otherwise the play can have stimulated Dryden little. Lady Love-all, the amorous old ancestor of Lady Cockwood, Lady Froth, Lady Plyant, and finally of Lady Wishfort, was never imitated by Dryden, though Mrs. Saintry of *Mr. Limberham* is like her in some respects. See p. 205, n. 147.

<sup>112</sup> Preface to *The Wild Gallant*, Works, II, 27. Both Pepys and Evelyn saw it at Court, Evelyn at its first performance, February 5, 1663, and Pepys on February 23, 1663.

<sup>113</sup> *To the Lady Castlemaine, Upon Her Incuraging His First Play*, Works, XI, 18.



him in qualities not found in the average Restoration debauchee. When Justice Trice uses an oath, Loveby reproaches him, and continues:

I swear not, I drink not, I curse not, I cheat not; they are unnecessary vices: I save so much out of these sins, and take it out in that one necessary vice of wenching.<sup>114</sup>

Now in abstaining from drink Loveby was not at all like most of the gentlemen of the day. The best known of the courtiers, Rochester, Dorset, and Sedley, were all drinkers, the first having been drunk for five years without interval, according to Burnet,<sup>115</sup> and the other two having achieved immortality through a drinking brawl recounted by Anthony Wood.<sup>116</sup> But Loveby is like the king here. Pepys, though he mentions Charles nearly a thousand times in his diary, reports him as having been drunk but once!<sup>117</sup> Gramont's and Evelyn's information tends to the same conclusion, that the king was voluptuous and sensual and enormously addicted to women, but that he did not drink. Halifax gives a great deal of space to Charles' amours, but is likewise silent about drinking,<sup>118</sup> and the same thing can be said of Burnet.<sup>119</sup> Loveby is also like the king in refusing to swear and curse. All Charles' bi-

<sup>114</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, IV, 1.

<sup>115</sup> *Some Passages of the Life and Death of the Right Honorable John, Earl of Rochester* [London, 1680], p. 12

<sup>116</sup> *The Life and Times of Anthony Wood, Antiquary of Oxford . . .*, I, 476-477.

<sup>117</sup> October 23, 1668

<sup>118</sup> George Savile, Marquess of Halifax, *A Character of King Charles the Second*. See especially pp. 16-25. Later (p. 51), in discussing Charles' faults, Halifax says that Charles ate too much, but again he does not mention drinking.

<sup>119</sup> *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time* (London, 1724). Burnet often observes that the king was given over to vice, but whenever Burnet is specific about this vice he shows that it consisted of lack of religion (I, 104, II, 319) or fornication (I, 105, 200, II, 308). That Burnet considered drunkenness a vice serious enough to mention is shown by his censure of its existence in the nation as a whole (I, 103).

ographers agree that he did not blaspheme; his favorite oath was apparently "oddsfish." As for Loveby's partiality to wenching — no citations are necessary to prove that Charles was like him in this.

Loveby's coarseness, which is extreme even for a character in a Restoration comedy, and his love for pornographic puns, such as the one which ends the play, also remind one of the king, of whom Halifax says:

He was apter to make *broad Allusions* upon any thing that gave the least occasion, than was altogether suitable with the very Good-breeding he shewed in most other things. The Company he kept whilst abroad, had so used him to that sort of Dialect, that he was so far from thinking it a Fault or an Indecency, that he made it a matter of Rallery upon those who could not prevail upon themselves to join in it.<sup>120</sup>

Loveby, then, would please Charles,<sup>121</sup> as would Dryden's ridicule of Scotland,<sup>122</sup> where, during a part of his exile, the king had spent a dreary time.<sup>123</sup>

In somewhat the same way the ladies of *The Wild Gallant*

<sup>120</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 30

<sup>121</sup> It is significant that, when Dryden revised the play in 1667, the only change which he speaks of making is an augmentation of Loveby's sexual experience. In the prologue to the revised play, after saying that he formerly thought Loveby "monstrous lewd" because he was "suspected with" Mrs Bibber, Dryden continues:

"But, since his [the author's] knowledge of the town began,  
He thinks him now a very civil man,  
And, much ashamed of what he was before,  
Has fairly play'd him at three wenches more.  
'Tis some amends his frailties to confess;  
Pray pardon him his want of wickedness:  
He's towardsly, and will come on apace,  
His frank confession shows he has some grace."

<sup>122</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, IV, 2. There Isabelle says "The child [the one with which Lord Nonsuch imagines he is pregnant] shall be christened by the directory; and the gossips' gifts shall be the gude Scotch kivenant."

<sup>123</sup> *A Dictionary of National Biography*, X, 87, and Beljame, *Le Public et les hommes de lettres au dix-huitième siècle* (Paris, 1897), pp. 1-2.

must have pleased the Countess of Castlemaine. Isabelle promises to cuckold her husband after marriage — "if it were but to prove myself a wit" — conduct modeled as closely as possible on that of the Countess, who apparently cut short her honeymoon in order to take her place in the royal bed.<sup>124</sup> Isabelle's attitude toward Loveby's promiscuity, too, would be likely to appeal to the king's mistress:

. . . the worst you can say of . . . [Loveby] is, he loves women: and such make the kindest husbands, I'm told. If you had a sum of money to put out, you would not look so much whether the man were an honest man (for the law would make him that), as if he were a good sufficient paymaster.<sup>125</sup>

This coarseness in Isabelle's language, so well illustrated in other parts of the play as to be unquotable,<sup>126</sup> is a trait not found in most pre-Restoration heroines, or in Restoration heroines for that matter. Those ladies were made to keep a freedom from crudeness and vulgarity which preserved in them one of the attractions of innocence, though they were allowed by their authors to speak of love in heretical fashion. Coarseness in speech, however, would be more likely than not to please the woman who later called out of her coach window to Wycherley, "You, Wycherley, you are a son of a whore."<sup>127</sup>

The importance of the likeness of Dryden's characters to the king and his mistress should not, of course, be overemphasized. They were, however, the leaders of the Court, and that Dryden's earlier comedies were what they were must be to

<sup>124</sup> Loveby's opinions about chastity and constancy are not the same as those of Isabelle, but his attitude is equally favorable to promiscuity.

<sup>125</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, IV, 2

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1, and III, 2

<sup>127</sup> John Dennis, *Letters Familiar, Moral and Critical* (London, 1721), II, 216. The Countess, then Duchess of Cleveland, was alluding, as Dennis points out, to a song in *Love in a Wood* which ends,

"Great Wits and great Braves  
Have always a Punk to their Mother."

some degree due to them, whether that influence was direct or whether it was felt through the gentlemen and the ladies who imitated them.<sup>128</sup> And even though Nicoll is right, and Dryden had his eye more on Hart and Nell Gwyn than on his noble patrons when he produced his later pairs of witty lovers, it should be remembered that the king and the actor were less distinguishable at this time than they had been at almost any other period of English history. Hart, like the king, had both Nell and the Countess for mistresses.

How anxious Dryden was to please the royal taste during the first half of his career can perhaps be seen by comparing the comedies he wrote during that time with those he wrote later. During the first decade he produced his best high comedy, the better parts, probably, of *The Wild Gallant*, *The Maiden Queen*, *The Mock Astrologer*, *Marriage à la Mode*, and *The Assignment*.<sup>129</sup> In 1670, however, he achieved the posts of poet laureate and historiographer royal, thus freeing himself from the necessity of making Court favor his primary aim. Besides, he had had since 1667 a contract to furnish three plays a year to Killigrew, and as a full-fledged professional dramatist he could not ignore the fact that the audience was growing steadily more bourgeois. The result was that *The Assignment* (1673) was his last high comedy; after it, and

<sup>128</sup> The importance of the grace and wit and morals of the whole group of ladies and gentlemen of Charles' Court on Dryden's comedies and the comedies of his contemporaries was of course great, though it has not been stressed here or in later chapters. In view of his statements in the epilogue to *The Conquest of Granada* and in the *Defence of the Epilogue* not much discussion of such influence is necessary. It has already been almost universally recognized.

Some of the likeness of the heroes and heroines of Restoration comedy to the ladies and gentlemen of the Court must, however, have been caused by these ladies' and gentlemen's copying what they saw on the stage — life imitated art, and vice versa. The characters of Gramont's *Mémoires*, for instance, if the book indeed be history and not fiction, cannot have failed to be so influenced.

<sup>129</sup> In *The Assignment*, the last of these, low comedy is already beginning to appear.

partly in it, he turned to low comedy to please this new audience, and *Mr. Limberham* and the comic parts of *The Spanish Friar*, *Don Sebastian*, *Amphitryon*, and *Love Triumphant* are of this type.<sup>120</sup>

This seems like a better explanation for the change in Dryden's comedies than the one sometimes given, that he shrank from competition with Wycherley and Congreve, for the earlier success of *Etherege* in *Love in a Tub* and *She Would If She Could* had apparently had the opposite effect of spurring him on to greater efforts. And Dryden was perhaps not wrong in making the change. The comedy of manners was all right for gentlemen who were writing for the fun of it and who turned out but four plays in a lifetime. But Dryden was trying to please his audiences, with comedies and tragedies together, three times a year.<sup>121</sup> What he wrote after the change is not nearly so interesting to modern taste as are his earlier efforts, but it was a success more than half the time<sup>122</sup> and this was doing at least as well as Congreve and Wycherley did.

As for the Jonsonian part of *The Wild Gallant*, Dryden seems to have learned a lesson from its failure and never to have imitated Jonson's humours extensively again until *Mr. Limberham*. He mentions Jonson often enough, either to aggrandize himself by belittling Ben, as in his *Defence of the Epilogue*, or to defend himself against the critics by citing Jonson's authority in favor of the comedy of repartee, as in the preface to *The Mock Astrologer*. But of definite Jonsonian influence on Dryden's comedy (except for *Mr. Limberham*) there is little after *The Wild Gallant*. How little there is, is

<sup>120</sup> Another and even more successful attempt to please this new audience is seen in the later sentimental comedy.

<sup>121</sup> He fell short of this contract in nearly every year.

<sup>122</sup> Though *Mr. Limberham* and *Love Triumphant* were failures, *Don Sebastian* and *Amphitryon*, especially the latter, were successes.

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indicated by the brevity of Saintsbury's appendix on *Dryden and Jonson*.<sup>123</sup> Saintsbury here dwells chiefly on verse and critical theory, in which Dryden was obviously most influenced, but sees nothing of Jonson in the *plays*, other than the humours in *The Wild Gallant*.

<sup>123</sup> *Works*, XVIII, 285.

## CHAPTER II

### "THE RIVAL-LADIES"

#### I

THOUGH Dryden's second <sup>1</sup> drama, *The Rival-Ladies* (1664), is designated on the title-page as a tragic-comedy, it has often been referred to as if it were one of his comedies and discussed as if it continued what Dryden had begun in *The Wild Gallant*. But it is as different from *The Wild Gallant* as possible. It lies entirely outside the group of Dryden's comedies and in the line of development which connects Fletcher's tragicomedies with Dryden's later heroic plays.

It is not enough merely to point out that the *The Rival-Ladies* is a tragicomedy rather than a comedy. For there are two sorts of tragicomedies in Dryden: (1) plays with a certain proportion of tragic seriousness, but with a happy ending; (2) plays which combine two plots, one tragic and one comic. In the first class come all the heroic plays.<sup>2</sup> The second group includes *The Maiden Queen*, *Marriage à la Mode*, *The Spanish Friar*, *Don Sebastian*, and *Love Triumphant*.<sup>3</sup> *The Rival-Ladies* belongs in the first of these groups. It is an embryonic heroic play, not a two-plot tragicomedy.

The correct classification of *The Rival-Ladies* is stressed, not because it was difficult to make, but because critics have

<sup>1</sup> But see later in this chapter the discussion of the question of the precedence between *The Rival-Ladies* and *The Indian Queen*

<sup>2</sup> James W. Tupper, "The Relation of the Heroic Play to the Romances of Beaumont and Fletcher," *PMLA*, XX (1905), 584-621. Tupper here makes quite clear the relationship between Dryden's heroic plays and Beaumont and Fletcher's tragicomedies.

<sup>3</sup> These tragicomedies are discussed in the next chapter.

often erred incomprehensibly in making it. Nicoll, for instance, says in his *History of Restoration Drama*:<sup>4</sup> "The intrigues of *The Wild Gallant* Dryden continued in *The Rival-Ladies*," and Christie also apparently thought the two plays were to be classified together.<sup>5</sup> Other critics have made the inexplicable error of including *The Rival-Ladies* with the two-plot tragicomedies.<sup>6</sup> In view of the persistence of these various misapprehensions as to the real character of *The Rival-Ladies*, it will perhaps be worth while to indicate just what features of the play show that it is in the heroic convention.

In the first place, the situation is almost never comic.<sup>7</sup> We admire the *virtu* of Gonsalvo and wonder at the complexities into which conflicting standards of love and honor throw him. If we ever laugh at him, we do so for the same reason that we laugh at Victorian melodrama — because the system of ethics on which the play is based is outmoded. Gonsalvo never loses his seriousness.

This seriousness is enough to rule the play out of the list of Dryden's true comedies. Other qualities identify it as "heroic." Gonsalvo's *virtu* has already been mentioned, and the

<sup>4</sup> P. 215

<sup>5</sup> W. D. Christie, "Memoir of Dryden," prefaced to *Dryden* (selected poems), p. xx

<sup>6</sup> Tupper, *op. cit.*, p. 600, makes this mistake, as does F. H. Ristine, *English Tragicomedy, Its Origin and History*. Nicoll is the only one who makes the mistake of including *The Rival-Ladies* in two incorrect categories. As is noted in the text above, he classifies it with *The Wild Gallant* in his *History of Restoration Drama*. In his *British Drama* (p. 246), however, he says: "Both *The Rival Ladies* and . . . *The Maiden Queen* are tragi-comedies in the sense that a wholly serious and almost heroic plot is paralleled by another theme as typically comic."

<sup>7</sup> There are a few slightly comic bits, such as Act IV, Scene 3, the part in which Honoria and Angelina fight with each other, each believing that the other is a man, and the end of Act I, Scene 3, but they are of short extent, and the characters who take part in them are elsewhere serious. They are the only portions of the play which seem to justify Pepys in calling it a "pretty, witty" play (*Diary*, August 4, 1664).



intricacy of the plot and the quick changes in the fortunes of the characters, while not as striking as the same things in *The Conquest of Granada*, are perhaps nearer to that play than they are to anything in Beaumont and Fletcher. The attitude of the characters toward love and honor and their debates about ethics are also "heroic." Gonsalvo's love for Julia is not reciprocated; and he finds it necessary to fight with the man she does love in order to make him marry her; that is, to prove his love by making it impossible for it ever to be successful. At another and earlier point in the play Julia's brother, who is her guardian, has given her to Gonsalvo, and then has left. Julia immediately falls to her knees.

*Gonsalvo:*

Madam, when you implore the powers divine,  
You have no prayers in which I will not join. . . .

*Julia:*

Heaven has resigned my fortune to your hand,  
If you, like heaven, the afflicted understand.

*Gonsalvo:*

The language of the afflicted is not new;  
Too well I learned it, when I first saw you.

*Julia:*

In spite of me, you now command my fate;  
And yet the vanquished seeks the victor's hate;  
Even in this low submission, I declare,  
That, had I power, I would renew the war.  
I'm forced to stoop, and 'twere too great a blow  
To bend my pride, and to deny me too.

*Gonsalvo:*

You have my heart; dispose it to your will;  
If not, you know the way to use it ill.

*Julia:*

Cruel to me, though kind to your desert,  
My brother gives my person, not my heart;

And I have left no other means to sue,  
But to you only, to be freed from you.

Gonsalvo:

From such a suit how can you hope success,  
Which, given, destroys the giver's happiness?<sup>8</sup>

This is one of the first and best examples of the skill of Dryden's heroic characters in what Scott called "the metaphysical logic of amorous jurisprudence." As has often been noted, the Fletcherian blank verse of most of the play is replaced at times by a number of couplets in the heroic manner, like those quoted above.<sup>9</sup> In fact, were it not that Gonsalvo is made by Dryden to give up Julia at the end and content himself with Honoria (as Almanzor, for instance, was not required to do), we might call the play altogether heroic.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *The Rival-Ladies*, IV, 1.

<sup>9</sup> The heroic part of the play is not confined by any means to the part in couplets.

In the very first scene of *The Rival-Ladies* Gonsalvo reveals something of the same hyperbole in his language that was later to be found in the speeches of Dryden's most exaggerated heroic characters. For example, after having fallen in love with Julia at first sight, Gonsalvo finds that she has left and exclaims:

"She's gone, she's gone, and who or whence she is  
I cannot tell; methinks, she should have left  
A track so bright, I might have followed her;  
Like setting suns, that vanish in a glory" (I, 1).

And a few lines later when Hippolite says, "I fear you love her, sir," Gonsalvo replies,

"No, no, not love her  
Love is the name of some more gentle passion;  
Mine is a fury, grown up in a moment  
To an extremity, and lasting in it,  
An heap of powder set on fire, and burning  
As long as any ordinary fuel."

<sup>10</sup> If *The Rival-Ladies* had been seen in its true light, the many critics who have written about heroic plays would probably have studied its sources as guides to those of the full-fledged heroic play, but, as observed above, the drama has been largely neglected by these students. Miss Lynch, in *The Social Mode of Restoration Comedy* (pp 123-124), and in "Conventions of the Platonic Drama in the Heroic Plays of Orrery and Dryden" (*PMLA*,

## II

In his essay *Of Heroic Plays*, which he prefixed to *The Conquest of Granada*, Dryden presents an excellent account of how he happened to write heroic plays, giving the largest part of the credit to Davenant's *Siege of Rhodes* and to the general influence of epic poems and their heroes. This account is probably near to the truth and more accurate than are most of Dryden's explanations about what works influenced him in his writing. Nevertheless, these sources have been convincingly added to many times by later critics. The influence of Corneille, directly and through English rhymed translations of his plays, must be admitted. French romances obviously were important sources of situations and atmosphere. The importance of Orrery, of Beaumont and Fletcher, and of early Platonic drama<sup>21</sup> cannot be ignored.

These ancestors of the English heroic play may be supposed to have had an influence on Dryden when he wrote *The Rival-Ladies*; in many instances their ethos is the same. But there are more specific sources to the play which are worth while studying, not only because they throw light on how Dryden worked, but because a consideration of them may aid in the study of the sources of the great, full-fledged heroic dramas

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XLIV [1929], 456-471), has mentioned the relation to earlier Platonic drama of such passages of "amatory battledore and shuttlecock" as the quotation given above, but has done no more. B. J. Pendlebury, *Dryden's Heroic Plays* (pp. 86-89), has made some reference to the heroic qualities of the play, but aside from observing that "The setting of the play is rather like that of a Spanish comedy, or like the similar settings of Beaumont and Fletcher," he has shown no interest in the source. Edward Siegert, in "Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery und seine Dramen" (*Wiener Beiträge*, XXIII [1906], 20), also mentions the play's heroic elements.

<sup>21</sup> C. G. Child, "The Rise of the Heroic Play," *Modern Language Notes*, XIX (1904), 166-173. J. B. Fletcher, "Précieuses at the Court of Charles I," *Journal of Comparative Literature*, I (1903), 120-153.

such as *The Indian Emperor*, *Tyrannic Love*, and *The Conquest of Granada*.<sup>12</sup>

To begin with, it seems very likely that Dryden's chief reason for making *The Rival-Ladies* the kind of play it is was the great success of Sir Samuel Tuke's *Adventures of Five Hours*.<sup>13</sup> Dryden's recognition of the popularity of the latter comedy and his reference to it in the prologue and epilogue of *The Wild Gallant* has already been spoken of.<sup>14</sup> His first attitude toward the vogue of the "Spanish plot" had been faintly contemptuous. It had not shaken, for the moment, his confidence in the basic superiority of Fletcher and Ben. But his attitude now changed. Faced by the continued popularity of Tuke's play and by the dismal failure he had made in his attempt to challenge it by writing *The Wild Gallant* in the older English tradition, Dryden did what he was to do often during his dramatic career — swam with the tide and gave the public what it wanted, a play like the one Tuke had scored with, a play in the Spanish manner. Gaw, whose dissertation on Tuke's play has been cited above, makes this discovery,<sup>15</sup> a discovery that, like the one he made about *The Wild Gallant*, has not had the recognition it merits, for critics have continued to make the old mistakes. As Gaw observes,<sup>16</sup> it seems likely that Dryden imitated Tuke, not by adapting a Spanish play, but by writing a play in that manner. Other critics fail

<sup>12</sup> An interest in Dryden's great heroic plays cannot well be avoided by a student of his comedies, especially in view of the juxtaposition of comic and heroic scenes in the two-plot tragicomedies, which, as I shall show in Chapter III, indicates that Dryden was fully aware of the violent contrast between the ethos of the two kinds of drama and was even using this contrast artistically

<sup>13</sup> See p. 3, n. 12

<sup>14</sup> See pp. 2-4

<sup>15</sup> Allison Gaw, "Tuke's 'Adventures of Five Hours' in Relation to the 'Spanish Plot' and to John Dryden," *Publ Univ Pennsylvania*, Series in Philology and Literature, XIV (1917), 29, 32, 60

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 29.

to recognize this fact. Miss Sherwood laments<sup>17</sup> that "the Spanish source" for *The Rival-Ladies* has not been found. Scott states that "this play, like that which preceded it, is . . . borrowed from the Spanish."<sup>18</sup> W. Harvey-Jellie gives *The Rival-Ladies* as one of the plays which had a Spanish source.<sup>19</sup> Saintsbury says that the play is remarkable "for imitating closely the tangled plot of its Spanish original."<sup>20</sup> But Gaw is probably right in thinking that the Spanish influence is not a direct one, not only because Dryden does not elsewhere prove that he could read Spanish,<sup>21</sup> but also, it seems to me, because the whole tone of Dryden's preface to the play is that of a man who has been constructing his own plot:

MY LORD,

This worthless present was designed you long before it was a play; when it was only a confused mass of thoughts, tumbling over one another in the dark; when the fancy was yet in its first work, moving the sleeping images of things towards the light, there to be distinguished, and then either chosen or rejected by the judgment. . . .<sup>22</sup>

In view of these considerations, the theory that *The Rival-Ladies* is in any sense an adaptation of a Spanish play will probably have to be abandoned, at least until proof of Spanish influence is brought forward. Until such proof appears Gaw's suggestion that the play was chiefly influenced by Tuke's play will be the most acceptable.

That Tuke's play had *some* influence is certain. This is indicated by the prologue to *The Rival-Ladies*, in which Dryden says:

<sup>17</sup> Margaret P. Sherwood, *Dryden's Theory and Practice*, p. 45.

<sup>18</sup> *Works*, II, 127.

<sup>19</sup> W. Harvey-Jellie, *Les Sources du théâtre anglais à l'époque de la Restauration*, Appendix V.

<sup>20</sup> George Saintsbury, *John Dryden* ("English Men of Letters"), p. 40.

<sup>21</sup> See p. 5, n. 22.

<sup>22</sup> *Works*, II, 129-130.

You now have habits, dances, scenes, and rhymes;  
High language often; ay, and sense, sometimes.  
As for a clear contrivance, doubt it not;  
They blow out candles to give light to th' plot.  
And for surprise, two bloody minded men  
Fight till they die, then rise and dance again.  
Such deep intrigues you're welcome to this day:  
But blame yourselves, not him who writ the play;  
Though his plot's dull, as can be well desired,  
Wit stuff as any you have e'er admired:  
He's bound to please, not to write well; and knows,  
There is a mode in plays as well as clothes. . . .

Dryden is here saying that in *The Rival-Ladies* he has written the kind of play that has been pleasing the public — and that the public is therefore to blame for it — and in characterizing what has already pleased the popular taste, he says:

They blow out candles to give light to th' plot,

an unmistakable reference to an incident at the beginning of Act V of *The Adventures*, where a candle is extinguished so that Flora may prove her virginity by relighting it with her breath.

This reference was noted by Gaw,<sup>23</sup> but in the same prologue there are other indications, which he has not noted, that Dryden's thoughts were dwelling on Tuke's play. The last part of Dryden's prologue, not yet quoted, is modeled on Tuke's epilogue.<sup>24</sup> In the latter, one of the characters, Diego, makes ridiculous objections to the play, the last objection being:

But here you have a Piece so subtly Writ  
Men must have Wit themselves to find the Wit:  
Faith that's too much; therefore by my consent,  
We'll Damn the Play.

<sup>23</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>24</sup> The epilogue to the first version of *The Adventures* is not printed in B Van Thal's edition of the play (1927). It is in Gaw, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10, however.

**Think'st thou, Impertinent,  
That these, who know the Pangs of bringing forth  
(*Pointing to the Pit*)**

A Living Scene, should e'r destroy this Birth.  
 You ne'r can want such Writers, who aspire  
 To please the Judges of that Upper Tire.  
 The knowing are his Peers, and for the rest  
 Of the illiterate Croud (though finely drest)  
 The Author hopes, he never gave them cause  
 To think, he'd waste his Time for their Applause.  
 You then (most equal Judges) freely give  
 Your Votes, whether this Play should Die, or Live.

Dryden, in his prologue to *The Rival-Ladies*, arranges the same kind of interruption, followed likewise by a discussion of what members of the audience are competent judges.<sup>28</sup> I continue the prologue from where the quotation on page 57 broke off. The first Prologue is speaking:

Therefore, kind judges —

(A Second Prologue enters)

2. Hold; would you admit  
For judges all you see within the pit?

1. Whom would he then except, or on what score?

2. All, who (like him) have writ ill plays before;  
For they, like thieves condemned, are hangmen made,  
To execute the members of their trade.  
All that are writing now he would disown,<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> The same part of Tuke's epilogue had been paralleled and answered by Dryden in his epilogue to the 1662/3 version of *The Wild Gallant*. As Gaw points out (*op cit*, p. 17), the first four of the last six of Tuke's lines quoted above were what Dryden had in mind when he wrote in that epilogue.

“ There is not any person here so mean,  
But he may freely judge each act and scene  
But if you bid him choose his judges, then,  
He boldly names true English gentlemen  
For he ne'er thought a handsome garb or dress  
So great a crime, to make their judgement less . . . ”

**26 Dryden later takes a more broad-minded and pleasantly humorous view**

But then he must except — even all the town;  
All choleric, losing gamesters, who, in spite,  
Will damn to-day, because they lost last night;  
All servants, whom their mistress' scorn upbraids;  
All maudlin lovers, and all slighted maids;  
All, who are out of humour, or severe;  
All, that want wit, or hope to find it here.

Dryden, while following Tuke's form here, disagrees with his conclusions. Instead of considering other authors the best judges of a play, he specifically denies that they have any critical ability.

A further indication that Dryden had Tuke in mind when he wrote *The Rival-Ladies* is that a line from Tuke's epilogue,

Men must have Wit themselves to find the Wit,  
is clearly echoed in the last line of Dryden's prologue:

All, that want wit or hope to find it here.<sup>27</sup>

of the matter when he admits in the second prologue to *The Maiden Queen* that he himself is

"A cursed critic as e'er damn'd a play"  
and adds:

"Yet think not he'll your ancient rights invade,  
Or stop the course of your free damning trade";  
and then continues:

"For he (he vows) at no friend's play can sit,  
But he must needs find fault, to show his wit.  
Then, for his sake, ne'er stint your own delight,  
Throw boldly, for he sets to all that write,  
With such he ventures on an even lay,  
For they bring ready money into play  
Those who write not, and yet all writers nick,  
Are bankrupt gamesters, for they damn on tick"

<sup>27</sup> It is to the typical popular play of the time, not merely to Tuke's play, that Dryden pretends to be referring in the first part of the prologue to *The Rival-Ladies*, and other plays may be meant in addition to *The Adventures of Five Hours*. The reference to "habits, dances, scenes and rhymes," for instance, might allude to *The Siege of Rhodes*, except for the fact that Dryden probably would not have been contemptuous of that, in view of his later praise



It is almost certain, too, that Dryden's "Wit stiff as any you have e'er admired," in the part of Dryden's prologue quoted on page 57, is a reference to the wit of Tuke's play, for the adjective "stiff" seems to have been a favorite one for use by critics of Tuke's style.<sup>28</sup>

A careful examination, then, of the prologue of *The Rival-Ladies* shows that Dryden was trying to give the public what it had proved it wanted by its patronage of other recent plays, particularly of Tuke's *Adventures*. And when we compare

of it in his essay *Of Heroic Plays*. I have not been able to trace the reference of the lines

"And for surprise, two bloody minded men  
Fight till they die, then rise and dance again,"

but Dryden may possibly have Tuke's play in mind, for, though its two heroes, Octavio and Antonio, do not fight until death, they do try to kill each other, and it seems possible that in the 1662 version of *The Adventures* a dance did take place at the end, for it is there indicated that each lover is to take his mistress by the hand.

<sup>28</sup> In "The Session of the Poets" (*Poems Relating to State Affairs*, pp. 152-158) the anonymous writer observes.

"Sam Tuke sat and formally smil'd at the rest;  
But Apollo, who well did his Vanity know,  
Call'd him to the Bar to put him to th' Test,  
But his Muse was so stiff she scarcely could go."

And Evelyn says of the play (*Diary*, January 8, 1662/3) that, though the plot was incomparable, the language was "stiff and formal." Finally, Dryden himself later speaks of Tuke's style as stiff in the epilogue to *Marriage à la Mode*, where, after an unmistakable reference to the opening lines of *The Adventures*, he says that such dull morals are composed by poets of "stiff words." Gaw notes (*op. cit.*, pp. 55-56) Dryden's reference to Tuke in the epilogue to *Marriage à la Mode*, but he does not, I think, point out that Dryden's similar mention of Tuke's stiff style in the prologue to *The Rival-Ladies* is further proof that Dryden was alluding to the author of *The Adventures*.

Dryden shows in many places that Sir Samuel had made a deep impression on him; he mentions *The Adventures*, not only in the prologues and the epilogues of the plays already referred to, but also several times in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (Gaw, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22). It seems almost certain, too, that in the epilogue to *The Indian Emperor* Dryden intends to refer to Tuke when he speaks of the "great dons of wit" and observes that

"Phoebus gives them full privilege alone  
To damn all others and cry up their own."

the two dramas we find that *The Rival-Ladies* is just such a play as one might write who was trying to repeat the success of *The Adventures*.

In the first place, it seems quite likely that Dryden chose Spain as the setting for his play because Tuke had shown recently that audiences approved of this. If the setting made the only likeness between the two plays, it would be worth mentioning in view of Dryden's prologue, but there are many more significant likenesses. Dryden's Spain is peopled with the same kind of characters as is Tuke's. In each of the plays there are two Spanish gentlemen, friends, each of whom is the guardian of a sister and has the right to choose a husband for her.<sup>29</sup>

Near the beginning of each play we are introduced to a young hero (Antonio in Tuke, Gonsalvo in Dryden), who saves one of the sisters from the hands of wicked captors and falls in love with her at first sight.<sup>30</sup> The complications of both plays are brought about by the struggles of the young ladies against the authority of their brothers, who want them to accept suitors they dislike, and both plays end with all the characters satisfactorily married.

Most of the few allusions to Spanish background in *The Rival-Ladies* might have been taken from Tuke's play. Thus when Angelina tries to escape from her home, she steals forth by the garden door, a natural means of furtive exit from Spanish houses with a patio.<sup>31</sup> But a garden door had been used by

<sup>29</sup> The gentlemen of Tuke's play are Don Henrique and Don Carlos; the sisters, Porcia and Camilla. In Dryden's play the gentlemen are Don Roderigo, sometimes called Don Roderick, and Don Manuel, the sisters, Angelina and Julia.

<sup>30</sup> In Tuke this rescue has taken place before the opening of the play and is recounted by the lady (Camilla), obviously for the purpose of informing the audience about it. This makes the story unconvincing. Dryden uses the same device with equal obviousness in I, 1, of *The Rival-Ladies* to allow Gonsalvo to inform the audience about his past, though he does represent rather than relate Gonsalvo's saving of Julia.

<sup>31</sup> *The Rival-Ladies*, I, 3.

Tuke's Porcia for the same purpose.<sup>82</sup> And the fighting which follows Angelina's discovery, fighting which is made possible by the Spanish moon,<sup>83</sup> is no different from that which had followed Porcia's discovery in *The Adventures*.<sup>84</sup> Also, in an earlier scene, when Julia asks Don Roderigo to put her in a monastery for safekeeping,<sup>85</sup> she is making the same suggestion that had been made for Porcia in *The Adventures*.<sup>86</sup>

In fact, if a modern drama were to resemble a late success as closely as *The Rival-Ladies* resembles *The Adventures*, every New York critic would call attention to the fact. The silence of Dryden's critic, Langbaine,<sup>87</sup> on this point is hard to understand. The only explanation for it seems to be that he was chiefly interested in uncovering Dryden's surreptitious borrowings; and this was not one of them, for Dryden had boldly admitted in his prologue that he was imitating Tuke

The similarity between Tuke's and Dryden's uses of rhyme couplets is worth mentioning. Dryden, of course, had precedent for his couplets in *The Siege of Rhodes*, but it is to be noted that in it couplets had been used throughout, whereas *The Rival-Ladies* is like *The Adventures* in using rhyme only for the most heroic passages<sup>88</sup> — as a means of heightening

<sup>82</sup> *The Adventures of Five Hours*, Act III

<sup>83</sup> *The Rival Ladies*, I, 3

The imitation of this moonlight scene in later plays is discussed by G. C. Odell in his *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving* (New York, 1920), I, 149-150

The swordplay which takes place at this point in both dramas is not carried on against a background of war. In this *The Rival-Ladies* is different from Dryden's later heroic plays and from most of the earlier plays which influenced him (*The Siege of Rhodes*, for instance), but like *The Adventures*

<sup>84</sup> Both fights are terminated when one of the principals stumbles

<sup>85</sup> *The Rival Ladies*, I, 2

<sup>86</sup> Act IV

<sup>87</sup> *An Account of the English Dramatic Poets*, p. 169

<sup>88</sup> Gaw notes (*op cit.*, p. 41) that 124 of the lines of the '63 version of Tuke's play are in couplets. He later observes (p. 144) that the same is true of 178 lines of Dryden's play.

them. The lines quoted above from Dryden's play <sup>39</sup> should be compared with passages from Tuke. In the first scene of the latter's play all the characters have been speaking in blank verse until Porcia enters. She soliloquizes:

My heart is so opprest, with fear and grief,  
That it must break, unless it find relief;  
The Man I love is forc'd to flie my sight  
And like a *Parthian*, kills me in his flight:  
One whom I never saw, I must embrace,  
Or else destroy the honour of my race.  
A Brothers Care, more cruel than his Hate;  
O how perplext is my unhappy fate!

Camilla enters and says that she also is suffering unequalled griefs; Porcia observes:

*Porcia:*

If yours, as mine, from Love-disasters rise,  
Our Fates are more alli'd than Families.

*Camilla:*

What, to our Sex, and blooming age can prove  
An anguish worthy of our Sighs, but Love?

*Porcia:*

'Tis true, *Camilla*, were your fate like mine,  
Hopeless to hold, unable to resign.

*Camilla:*

Let's tell our Stories, then we soon shall see,  
Which of us two excells in Misery.<sup>40</sup>

Such passages and the kinds of situations for which they are used in both plays suggest strongly in themselves that Dryden's were influenced by Tuke's. And by mentioning "the

<sup>39</sup> See p. 52

<sup>40</sup> Since the first edition of *The Adventures* (1663) is rare, it is perhaps well to state that this passage is quoted from it. Had the passage been added in the later editions, it might show the influence of Dryden on Tuke rather than vice versa.

new way . . . of writing scenes in verse " in the dedication of his play <sup>41</sup> Dryden proves beyond a doubt that this is so.

It is true that Dryden insists that this " new way " is really not a new way at all and points out that Waller, Denham, and Davenant wrote in couplets earlier than did Tuke,<sup>42</sup> but none of those he mentions as having anticipated Tuke in the use of rhyme interspersed this rhyme in longer passages of blank verse. It is this use of *scattered* passages of rhyme that is really new, and in using them Dryden is indebted to Tuke and not to the others he mentions.<sup>43</sup>

Dryden's unwillingness to admit that the couplets of *The Adventures* were models for those in *The Rival-Ladies* is understandable; for Dryden's are greatly superior to Tuke's. And Dryden outdid his teacher even more in his blank verse.<sup>44</sup>

Dryden has improved on Tuke in other ways than in the verse, notably in the strengthening of the women characters, who are extremely passive in *The Adventures*. In *The Rival-*

<sup>41</sup> *Works*, II, 134. By "verse" Dryden here means "rhyme," and so throughout the dedication.

<sup>42</sup> He even makes the mistaken statement that Buckhurst was also beforehand with those who wrote in the "new way" by using rhyme in *Gorboduc*.

<sup>43</sup> In searching for the sources of rhyme in the heroic play, critics have made a great deal of Dryden's mention here of Waller, Denham, and Davenant. Had they realized the significance of the expression "new way" they would at least have added Tuke's name to the list, it deserves a most important place in it. Nicoll is one of the critics who has referred only to the earlier poets and ignored Tuke. See *A History of Restoration Drama*, pp. 90-121.

The serious scenes of Etherege's *Love in a Tub* are in rhyme, but *The Rival Ladies* was probably not influenced by them, for Dryden's imitation of other elements in Tuke's play makes it likely that his debt is to Tuke for this also. Then, too, Etherege's drama probably did not antedate Dryden's by a long enough time, if at all, to allow Dryden to follow it.

<sup>44</sup> Dryden has written some of his best blank verse in this play. See especially I, 1 (*Works*, II, 144). Tuke's blank verse is halting, irregular, at times almost laughably so. There are many lines like the following

"We being Pris'ners, were hurri'd strait away  
To th' Enemies Quarters, where my ill Fate . . ."

Act III.

"Ho! Don Henrique, come away, all's Prepared. . . ."

*Ladies* they do a considerable amount of the wooing, and two of them, Honoria and Angelina, pursue the men they love by disguising themselves as boys, like Shakespeare's and Fletcher's heroines. It is worth noting, too, that, whereas Tuke's women are interested chiefly in love and think comparatively little about honor, leaving that to the men, Dryden's Julia allows honor to prevent her accepting a desired lover, just as a man would.<sup>45</sup>

Especially to be noted in comparing *The Rival-Ladies* with *The Adventures* is the advance of the heroic *virtu* of Gonsalvo over that of any of Tuke's characters. When Gonsalvo fights, we know that he will win. His language, too, is much more heroic than that of any character in Tuke's play. He is a step forward on the way to Almanzor.<sup>46</sup>

The heroic elements in *The Rival-Ladies* are not, then, wholly due to Tuke's precedent. Other playwrights may by their example have helped Dryden improve upon Tuke. Of the many dramatists mentioned above who show that the heroic spirit was in the air, there is one who deserves special notice. He is the Earl of Orrery. Just which of his plays Orrery had written at this time is not certain.<sup>47</sup> It is enough that he had written heroic plays. In dedicating his drama to Orrery Dryden not only praises him, but reveals admiration

<sup>45</sup> *The Rival-Ladies*, I, 2.

<sup>46</sup> The heroic qualities of *The Adventures* may be seen from its comparison with *The Rival-Ladies* in the foregoing discussion. These qualities have often been mentioned. See especially Child, *op cit.*, pp. 166-173, and Gaw, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-45. Gaw overemphasizes, perhaps, the heroic characteristics of Camilla.

<sup>47</sup> See F. W. Payne, "The Question of Precedence between Dryden and the Earl of Orrery with Regard to the English Heroic Play," *Review of English Studies*, I (1925), 173-181; also three articles by William S. Clark, "Further Light upon the Heroic Plays of Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery," *Review of English Studies*, II (1926), 206-211. "The Published but Unacted 'Heroic Plays' of Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery," *ibid.*, pp. 280-283, "The Earl of Orrery's Play *The General*," *ibid.*, pp. 459-460. Payne thinks that Orrery's earliest play was *The Black Crime*; Clark feels certain that it was *The General*.

of a quality different from that of the ordinary poet for his patron. Dryden's statement that Orrery had been pleased to have the younger poet's writings cross the Irish seas to kiss his hands,<sup>48</sup> indicates that there was interest on both sides.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> *Works*, II, 131.

<sup>49</sup> The importance of Beaumont and Fletcher as forerunners of the heroic play has been mentioned (see p. 54). So far as *The Rival-Ladies* is concerned, however, their influence seems to have been only a general one. The fact that Honoria and Angelina both disguise themselves as boys has caused critics to mention *Philaster* as having suggested parts of the play, but the situation was too common for its presence in both plays to have much significance. Viola in *Twelfth Night*, for instance, is one of the many heroines who assume male disguises to serve the men they love, and Amie of Brome's *Mad Couple Well Matched* is another. But of less direct influence of Beaumont and Fletcher there may be a great deal, in fact, most of the elements which the heroic play was to borrow from Beaumont and Fletcher are found already in this play.

Tupper, *op cit*, gives the best account of what the heroic play got from these two dramatists. I quote Dr A. C. Sprague's *précis* of Tupper from the preface of Sprague's *Beaumont and Fletcher on the Restoration Stage* (Harvard University Press, 1926), pp. xvii-xviii. He shows how Tupper compares them with the writers of heroic plays: "Both alike choose remote and unfamiliar scenes, with 'exalted personages only, whose fate involves that of the state'. Both 'sacrifice psychological interest in character to theatrical bustle,' resorting to varied and striking incidents which lead up to a denouement never simple or expected or inevitable, but always thoroughly effective on the stage. Characterization in the heroic drama is, indeed, reduced to the depiction of fixed types, some of which—particularly the vaunting hero of 'ungovernable passion,' 'the lovelorn maiden,' and the 'evil woman of high authority'—are anticipated in the work of Beaumont and Fletcher. They, finally, made much use of masques and masque elements—of 'somewhat adventitious scenic effects'—and here, too, their lead was followed by the later school."

In discussing the development of the English heroic play no critic seems to have been interested in the question of precedence between *The Rival-Ladies* and *The Indian Queen*, the latter an undoubtedly heroic play on which Dryden collaborated with his brother-in-law, Sir Robert Howard. Pendlebury, influenced, perhaps, by the fact that in his edition Scott places *The Rival-Ladies* before *The Indian Queen*, discusses them in that order (*op cit*, p. 89), but it seems likely that the order of production was just the reverse. A warrant has been preserved which proves that *The Indian Queen* was first given in January, 1663/4, whereas our first record of a performance of *The Rival-Ladies* is Pepys' mention of it on August 4, 1664. This fact suggests that *The Indian Queen* should be included among the plays likely to have had an influence on Dryden's "second comedy." It is at least probable that

Besides the dramas of Tuke and Orrery, the influence of whom Dryden made plain to his contemporaries in preface and prologue, and the partly heroic plays of other men, whose influence is too uncertain for illustration, there are two literary compositions that were of very definite help to Dryden in this play. They are Scarron's *Le Roman comique* and *The Satyricon* of Petronius Arbiter. Langbaine, Dryden's antagonistic contemporary, called attention to these sources,<sup>50</sup> and the lack of interest in them shown by modern critics indicates how much *The Rival-Ladies* has been neglected.<sup>51</sup>

Dryden worked on the two dramas simultaneously. Other plays with heroic characteristics which have not been mentioned here, but with which Dryden might very well have been acquainted, are *The Heroic-Lover, or The Infanta of Spain*, by George Cartwright (which Nicoll mentions in his *History of Restoration Drama*, pp 94-95), and Nabbes' *Covent Garden*, a part of which is heroic. Especially noteworthy in the latter play is Artlove's and Young Worthy's discussion of love and honor, III, 5.

<sup>50</sup> *An Account of the Oxford Dramatic Poets* . . . p 169 Langbaine's words are "As to his Oeconomy, and working up of his Play, our Author is not wholly free from pillage, witness the last Act, where the Dispute between *Amideu*, and *Hippolito*, with *Gonsalvo's* fighting with the Pirates, is borrowed from *Petronius Arbyter*, as the Reader may see by reading the Story of *Encolpius*, *Giton*, *Eumolpus*, and *Tryphaena*, aboard *Licias's Vessel* . . . To say nothing of the Resemblance of the *Catastrophe* with that of *Scarron's Rival Brothers, Novel the Fifth*."

<sup>51</sup> Since this was written Montague Summers' *Dryden, the Dramatic Works*, has appeared, and he does give Scarron, but not Petronius, credit (I, 132). Summers, however, merely mentions Scarron, without pointing out what parts of his story Dryden used or how he used them.

Earlier critics neglect both sources. Saintsbury (*Works*, II, 128) contents himself with repeating the information of Langbaine, and, in view of his comments on Langbaine elsewhere, one is led to believe that he does not consider his opinion here important. Harvey-Jellie (*op cit*, p 78) gives Scarron as a source, but the fact that he mistranslates *The Rival Brothers* (the words by which Langbaine translated "Les deux frères rivaux," which was Scarron's chapter heading) as "Les Frères ennemis" may show that he did not look up Scarron. In any case he underestimates the importance of this source.

Nicoll in his *History of Restoration Drama* (p 215) is no more correct than the others. As a compiler he has naturally suffered from the lack of critical material on Dryden's comedies. But in ignoring the true, if not very important, sources mentioned by Langbaine and substituting Scarron's *L'Écolier de Salamanque* (a play whose likeness to *The Rival-Ladies* is interesting, but



Dryden's use of Scarron and Petronius is not, of course, so important as is his imitation of Tuke and Orrery. He but took material from the two former, whereas he was influenced by the method and manner of the two latter. Scarron and Petronius were no more to him than Cinthio and Holinshed had been to Shakespeare; Tuke and Orrery had a place like that of Kyd and Marlowe.

"Les deux frères rivaux," the story of how two brothers wooed Dorothée and Félicianne de Montsalve, is an incidental *nouvel* in Scarron's *Le Roman comique*<sup>82</sup> Though it is a source of only part of *The Rival-Ladies*, and though Dryden changed it greatly in using it, the fact of its use is not to be doubted. Scarron's Dorothée and Félicianne de Montsalve become Julia and Honoria in *The Rival-Ladies*. Their father, Dom-Manuel, becomes the brother, Don Manuel. Scarron's Dom-Sanche becomes Don Roderigo de Sylva, the name

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not nearly close enough to convince us that Dryden necessarily even read it) Nicoll has committed a gratuitous error. *L'Écolier de Salamanque* is, however, surprisingly like the later English heroic play, even outdoing it in its weighing of love and honor by drachms and scruples.

The details of *The Rival-Ladies* are very little like those of this source suggested by Nicoll. In *L'Écolier de Salamanque* the women are insignificant, the problems which agitate the men have to do with their relations to each other. As friends who have saved each other's lives, the count and Don Pedro are bound in honor to continue to protect each other, as the seducers of each other's sisters, they are bound to kill each other. The result is that they vibrate between a benevolent and a bellicose attitude toward each other that is very much like the attitude of Antonio and Octavio (Act V of *The Adventures*), or of Glorimon and Lycidor (Act V of Orrery's *Attemira*); in fact, it is much more like many other English heroic plays than it is like *The Rival-Ladies*.

Summers (*op. cit.*, I, 131) seems to have spent considerable time examining other contemporary novels with names similar to that of Dryden's play in the hope of finding that they were sources. But he is able to discover nothing definite — though after scrutinizing *Las Dos Doncellas*, a *novela* by Cervantes, he does make the characteristic observation that "the thrust and riposte of cinquante dialogue [in Dryden's play] are extremely Spanish in character and taste."

<sup>82</sup> *Œuvres de Scarron*, II, Chapter 19, 322-350.

being suggested to Dryden by Dom-Sanche's words in Scarron, ". . . je porte le nom de Sylva, qui est celui de ma mère." <sup>58</sup> Dom-Juan de Peralte, the brother of Dom-Sanche in Scarron, becomes Don Gonsalvo de Peralta in Dryden.

Most of Scarron's story was not used by Dryden; he employed only the latter part of it, in which Scarron relates how all the other characters think that Dom-Sanche, the older of the two brothers, is dead, and how he returns in the manner of many heroes of romance to see whether his mistress is true to him, only to find his brother wooing her. Scarron's Dom-Sanche, however, recognizes his younger brother, whereas Dryden adds to the complication of the plot by having neither of the brothers remember the other. And otherwise Dryden has added much to the story. In *The Rival-Ladies* Dom-Manuel, changed by Dryden from a father into a brother, marries Gonsalvo's and Roderigo's sister, Angelina. Angelina did not exist in Scarron's story. Her addition enriches the intrigue particularly, since she loves her own brother, Gonsalvo, without knowing who he really is, of course, and Dryden's device of having her disguise herself as a boy makes it possible for her to follow him. There is no precedent in Scarron for her assumption of male attire, or for that of Honoria.

Dryden, moreover, represents Julia as feeling a great hatred for Gonsalvo, an emotion her predecessor Dorothée did not feel in Scarron; for Scarron's Dorothée refused to marry Dom-Juan merely because she was true to his supposedly dead brother. The addition of Julia's hatred for Gonsalvo is important, since it gives Dryden an opportunity for the representation of that struggle between motives which takes place in her — between hatred for, and gratitude to, Gonsalvo,

<sup>58</sup> P. 326. It should be further noted that Dryden's character, too, is bearing the name of his mother when he calls himself Don Roderigo de Sylva (see V, 3).

whose heroic *virtu* makes him able to save her life again and again. Nor did Dryden find in Scarron the internal struggle which he represents as taking place in Gonsalvo, a struggle between a desire to possess Julia, and a desire to serve her, the latter of which desires he can satisfy only by handing her over to Don Roderigo. Dryden has also increased Gonsalvo's physical heroism greatly over that of Dom-Juan.

In other words, Dryden has taken part of his plot from Scarron's novel, but he has used the material with great freedom. Not only has he avoided translating from Scarron — it seems possible that he did not even have the story before him as he wrote — but he has changed the *spirit* of the plot from that of a Spanish novel to that of a heroic play. In spite of this change his debt to Scarron is important enough to be mentioned.

Petronius Arbiter, as Langbaine says,<sup>54</sup> again without exciting the interest of later critics, gave Dryden the suggestion for one incident in *The Rival-Ladies*, the argument which takes place aboard the pirate vessel in Act V, Scene 2. The resemblance of this to Petronius is greater than the likeness to Scarron, but less important, since it involves only a small part of the play. It is as follows:

1. The pirate who is in charge of the vessel on which all the characters take refuge (*The Rival-Ladies*, V, 1) is suggested by the "archipirata" of Petronius (p. 202).<sup>55</sup>

2. Hippolito, who is Honoria disguised, proposes that "he" and Amideo, who is Angelina disguised, prevent their identity from being discovered by pretending to be seasick and asking to be set ashore (*The Rival-Ladies*, V, 2). This was taken from Petronius (p. 204):

<sup>54</sup> See p 67, n 50

<sup>55</sup> *Petronius Arbiter* (The Loeb Classical Library) has been used for this comparison, and the page references are to it.

. . . persuade gubernatori, ut in aliquem portum navem deducat, non sine praemio scilicet, et affirma ei impatientem maris fratrem tuum in ultimis esse.

That this is the real source is made more certain when the reply of Eumolpus in Petronius and of Amideo (Angelina) in Dryden are compared. Eumolpus objects: ". . . [non] tam cito fratrem defecisse veri simile erit." And Amideo says:

As if 'twere likely, in so calm a season,  
We should be sick so soon.

3. In Petronius (p 206) Eumolpus suggests that they hide by wrapping themselves up in bales:

. . . ego vos in duas iam pelles coniciam vinctosque loris inter vestimenta pro sarcinis habeo, apertis scilicet aliquatenus labris, quibus et spiritum recipere possitis et cibum. Conclamabo deinde nocte servos poenam graviorem timentes praecipitasse se in mare. Deinde cum ventum fuerit in portum, sine ulla suspicione pro sarcinis vos efferam.

From this, Dryden wrote the following, which he had Amideo speak (V, 2) :

Here are bundles  
Of canvas and of cloth, you see lie by us;  
In which one of us shall sew up the rest,  
Only some breathing place, for air, and food:  
Then call the pirates in, and tell them, we,  
For fear, had drowned ourselves: And when we come  
To the next port, find means to bring us out.

The reply to this suggestion by Encolpius in Petronius is paralleled by that of Honoria in Dryden. Encolpius says:

Ita vero . . . tamquam solidos alligaturus, quibus non soleat venter iniuriam facere? . . . Iuvenes adhuc laboris expertes statuarum ritu patiemur pannos et vincla?

In Dryden, Honoria replies:

Pithily spoken!  
As if you were to bind up marble statues,  
Which only bore the shapes of men without,  
And had no need of ever easing nature.

4. In Petronius Encolpius suggests (p. 204) the following means of escape from the pirate vessel:

Quin potius . . . ad temeritatem confugimus et per funem lapsi descendimus in scapham praecisoque vinculo reliqua fortunae committimus?

And Gonsalvo says (V, 2):

There's but one way left, that's this; —  
You know the rope, by which the cock-boat's tied,  
Goes down by the stern, and now, we are at anchor,  
There sits no pilot to discover us;  
My counsel is, to go down by the latter,  
And, being once there, unloose, and row to shore.<sup>86</sup>

Both in Petronius and in Dryden the objection is next made that there may be a guard in the boat. This thought causes the plan to be rejected in Petronius, but Dryden adds to Gonsalvo's heroism by having him volunteer to slide down the rope first and cope with the guard. From here on the play separates from the romance.<sup>87</sup>

It should be noted that the characters who discuss these plans for escape in the two compositions are very different. Giton, the boy of Petronius' story, is not a woman in disguise, as are Hippolito and Amideo, and the love that Encolpius and Eumolpus feel for him is homosexual. Dryden has used merely the events of the story, since his characters have already been developed along different lines.

<sup>86</sup> This quotation, especially the first line of Gonsalvo's speech, is an example of how bad Dryden's blank verse can be

<sup>87</sup> Apparently Dryden does not use Petronius elsewhere either in this play or in others.

### III

It appears after this survey that Tuke's drama, which had a part in persuading Dryden to write a play of its kind, is the most important of the works which influenced *The Rival-Ladies*, though the plays of Orrery and of others of Dryden's predecessors undoubtedly had some influence, too.<sup>58</sup> It also appears that Dryden's debt to Petronius and Scarron is a definite, if a small, one. *The Rival-Ladies*, then, is one of the proofs that Dryden was seldom completely original — that he was content to imitate and combine and improve. And in following Tuke he revealed his great and continual desire to be timely, his realization that "there is a mode in plays as well as clothes." Dryden was doing here just what he had done before in *The Wild Gallant* when he sought to achieve the popularity of Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Shirley, and what he did later when he imitated certain features of Etherege's great success, *Love in a Tub*, in his own *Maiden Queen*, or when, still later, he sought to please the new bourgeois audience of the 'seventies and 'eighties by imitating the low-comedy scenes of his fellows in *Mr. Limberham* and *The Spanish Friar*.

<sup>58</sup> As indicated above, Dryden's debt to Orrery and Davenant and to Beaumont and Fletcher has been well discussed elsewhere. Therefore I have not gone into that question with any detail here.

## CHAPTER III

### THE TRAGICOMEDIES

#### I

**A**FTER *The Rival-Ladies*, discussed in the last chapter, Dryden never again wrote a tragicomedy of the Beaumont and Fletcher type except so far as his heroic plays are a development out of that type. His other tragicomedies, beginning with *Secret Love or The Maiden Queen* (1667) and ending with *Love Triumphant* (1693), are all of another kind; they present two groups of characters, one comic and the other heroic or at least serious. The connection between these two groups of characters is nearly always extremely slight. Even in *The Spanish Friar* (1679 or 1680), in which Scott thought the two plots were unusually well joined,<sup>1</sup> the only relation between them is that Lorenzo, the comic hero, is an officer in the army of the tragic hero, Torrismond; and Lorenzo gives Torrismond only such help in regaining his throne as any supernumerary might have given. And in all his two-plot tragicomedies Dryden has followed the same formula; the serious and comic characters have nothing to do with each other until the last act, when the latter help the former recover or defend their thrones. Except for this they might be characters in different plays.<sup>2</sup> Of course Dry-

<sup>1</sup> *Works*, VI, 395

<sup>2</sup> When Cibber combined the comic plots of *The Maiden Queen* and *Marriage à la Mode* he had little difficulty in removing the heroic parts of the two plays. The mixture he made was given, more or less altered from time to time, at intervals until toward the end of the eighteenth century. See Wilhelm Krüger, *Das Verhältnis von Colley Cibbers Lustspiel The Comical Lovers zu John Dryden's Marriage à la Mode und Secret Love or the Maiden Queen* (Halle a S., 1902).

den makes what connections he can without too much trouble. In one play the king sets aside the important business of his own plot long enough to ask the comic hero's father about him, and in another play the comic hero is presented at Court, but such artificial ties merely accentuate the real divorce between the two sets of characters.<sup>3</sup>

Before discussing Dryden's reasons for using the formula he did, it will perhaps be well to indicate just which of his plays are of this type. Although many critics have referred to the lack of connection between the two plots of certain of the tragicomedies, a clear distinction between them and the other kind of tragicomedy has not been made,<sup>4</sup> even by Ristine in his *Tragicomedy*.

Though only three of Dryden's two-plot plays are called tragicomedies on the title-pages, two others were really cast in the same mold — *Marriage à la Mode*, called a comedy, and *Don Sebastian*, called a tragedy.<sup>5</sup> The first of these is too well

<sup>3</sup> John Genest (*Some Account of the English Stage*, II, 53) notes, for instance, that ". . . the comic part of [*Love Triumphant*] . . . has not the slightest connexion with the tragic part, except that when Alphonso takes up arms against Veramond, Carlos joins him."

<sup>4</sup> As was noted in Chapter II, Nicoll said (*British Drama*, p. 246) "Both *The Rival-Ladies* and *The Maiden Queen* are tragi-comedies in the sense that a wholly serious and almost heroic plot is paralleled by another theme as typically comic." This is correct as regards *The Maiden Queen*, but wrong as regards *The Rival-Ladies*.

F. H. Ristine, in *English Tragicomedy, Its Origin and History*, never treats the two-plot tragicomedy either before or after Dryden, and in his discussion of Dryden's plays which are of that kind (pp. 173-176) he does not even make it clear that they are something different from *The Rival-Ladies*. Neither he nor anyone else has stated with precision just which plays are in this group.

It should be added, perhaps, that Ristine mentions the severance of the comic plot from the serious plot as a Restoration characteristic, and says that it is "most noticeable in Dryden." Still he nowhere classifies tragicomedies under the two heads.

<sup>5</sup> In *The Cambridge History of English Literature* (Cambridge and New York, 1912), Vol. VIII, Chap. I, A. W. Ward treats *Marriage à la Mode* under "comedies" (p. 19) and *Don Sebastian* under "tragedies" (p. 34).



known for any argument to be needed to prove that it has the same pattern as *The Maiden Queen*. It is true that the author seems to have lost interest in the serious plot before he had brought it to its final polish. Nevertheless, the serious plot occupies the stage for as long a time as does the comic plot, and the connection between them is of the frailest kind. *Don Sebastian* might with more justice be classified as what it is called, a tragedy, for the serious plot far outweighs the comic plot in length and excellence. The comic plot, however, has a separate existence; it is more than comic relief of the kind we find in Shakespeare. The separation between the two plots is, in fact, unusually well preserved, and only slight changes would be necessary to prevent Don Sebastian, the tragic hero, from ever seeing Antonio, the comic hero. The five plays to be discussed in this chapter are, then: *The Maiden Queen*, *Marriage à la Mode*, *The Spanish Friar*, *Don Sebastian*, and *Love Triumphant*.

The first questions to be considered are: What precedent did Dryden have for this kind of tragicomedy? What examples of it in earlier drama could have influenced him when he began to produce it?

Elizabethan tragedies with mere comic relief are not, of course, of this type. The clown or the horse-courser in *Faustus*, the boy with the box in *The Spanish Tragedy*, and the clown in *Othello* may cause us to smile for a moment, but never for long draw our attention away from the serious business before us.

Some plays written before the closing of the theaters, however, anticipated the form Dryden used. *The Merchant of Venice* is a fusing of two actions, one much more serious than the other. In this drama the two plots were well combined, but in *Henry IV*, another play of similar duality, Shakespeare took almost as little care as Dryden was to take to bring about

apparent unity.<sup>6</sup> *Much Ado about Nothing* is an especially good example, for here the serious part is more nearly in the spirit of the heroic parts of Dryden's later dramas than was anything else of Shakespeare.<sup>7</sup> Jonson's *Case is Altered* has two plots, as do at least two of Beaumont and Fletcher's tragicomedies, *Monsieur Thomas*<sup>8</sup> and *The Spanish Curate*,<sup>9</sup> and in Shirley's works we find *The Example* and *The Wedding*.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Ristine (*op. cit.*, p. 187, n) states that when *Henry IV* was revived during the Restoration it was called a tragicomedy.

<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that *Much Ado about Nothing* has, in addition to the serious and the comic plot, scenes of low comedy, those in which Dogberry appears. In this it is like *Love in a Tub*, Dogberry corresponding to Dufous.

<sup>8</sup> D'Urfey's *Trick for Trick or The Debauched Hypocrite* (1678) is, as Langbaine observes, "only Fletcher's *Monsieur Thomas* reviv'd."

<sup>9</sup> The influence of Fletcher's *Spanish Curate* is no greater with respect to Dryden's tragicomedies than is any other of these plays, since, in spite of what Saintsbury has said (*John Dryden* in the *Mermaid Series*, II, 112) about its influence on *The Spanish Friar*, this influence does not exist, as is to be shown when that play is treated. Saintsbury's mistake has misled all who have followed him, notably Wilson. See pp. 126-127.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Davenport's *City Nightcap* (acted before 1642, first printed in 1661) should perhaps be included with the two-plot tragicomedies before Dryden, though neither plot is sustainedly comic. It is a kind of thesis play, in one plot we are shown what troubles arise when a husband is excessively jealous; in the other, the results of a husband's not being jealous enough. The second plot starts out to be low comedy, but ends rather seriously. Glapthorne's *Hollander* also has two separate plots, one serious (the Free-wit-Mistress Know-worth plot) and the other comic.

The most important two-plot tragicomedies which followed Dryden's successful use of the type were James Howard's *All Mistaken, or The Mad Couple* (September, 1667, six months after *The Maiden Queen*), Sedley's *Mulberry-Garden* (May, 1668), and Aphra Behn's *Widdow Ranter* (1689). In Howard's play the two railing lovers, Philidor and Mirida, make tirades against marriage in the manner of Celadon, and, since both agree, they are able at the end to refuse to put on the matrimonial chains (as Scott suggests Celadon and Florimel should have refused). The heroic portion of the play is in blank verse and is completely true to type. There are several comic strands, but the plot of Philidor and Mirida is the best. Sedley's *Mulberry-Garden* has railing lovers of the type of Celadon and Florimel, and the plot is laid in London. Ristine says that the two-plot kind of tragicomedy did not last long.

C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson have a brief discussion of two-plot Elizabethan plays in their edition of Jonson's works (Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1925 —), I, 319.

These plays may or may not have influenced Dryden when he wrote his first tragicomedy, *Secret Love or the Maiden Queen*, in 1667.<sup>11</sup> But the drama which probably had most to do in influencing its *form* was another, later tragicomedy, Etherege's *Love in a Tub*. In 1664 this play had made a greater success than any other theater production since the Restoration.<sup>12</sup> Dryden, seeking as usual to give the public what it wanted, produced another tragicomedy like it, just as he had modeled his first play on those of Beaumont and Fletcher and Jonson<sup>13</sup> and his second, to some degree at least, on the late successful drama of Sir Samuel Tuke.<sup>14</sup>

Dryden's interest in Etherege's first play is probably revealed in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*. In it Lisideius, who represents Sir Charles Sedley, criticizes the contemporary theater by observing:

. . . many scenes of our tragi-comedies carry on a design that is nothing of kin to the main plot; and . . . we see two distinct webs in a play, like those in ill-wrought stuffs, and two actions, that is, two plays, carried on together, to the confounding of the audience. . . . From hence . . . it arises, that the one half of our actors are not known to the other. They keep their distances, as if they were Montagues and Capulets, and seldom begin an acquaintance till the last scene of the fifth act, when they are to meet upon the stage. There is no theatre in the world has anything so absurd as the English tragi-comedy; it is a drama of our own invention. . . .<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> It was probably composed during Dryden's stay in the country, while the theaters were closed because of the plague and the fire.

<sup>12</sup> John Downes (*Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 25) says "The clean and well performance of this Comedy, got the Company more Reputation and Profit than any preceding Comedy, the Company taking in a Months time at it 1000 l." Downes terms the play a "comedy," but it was called a "poem" on the title-page when it was first published in 1664.

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter I.

<sup>14</sup> See Chapter II.

<sup>15</sup> *Works*, XV, 317. Sedley, who is represented as making this speech, apparently changed his mind later, for his *Mulberry-Garden* has the very qualities he attacks here.

Neander (Dryden) defends the English in this as in other things, refusing to admit that "compassion and mirth in the same subject destroy each other," and he concludes that it is ". . . to the honour of our nation, that we have invented . . . a more pleasant way of writing for the stage, than was ever known to the ancients or moderns of any nation, which is tragi-comedy."<sup>16</sup>

Now Dryden's use of the term tragicomedy to refer to a drama of two plots as if it had never meant anything else is an indication, I think, of the profound effect the success of *Love in a Tub* had had on him. Certainly the plays of the same type written by the Caroline dramatists and by Shirley would not seem to be numerous enough to cause the discarding of Fletcher's definition of tragicomedy, "not so called in respect of mirth and killing, but in respect it wants deaths, which is enough to make it no tragedy, yet being [= brings?] some near it, which is enough to make it no comedy. . . ." <sup>17</sup> But for a man like Dryden one contemporary success was likely to be more important than a hundred outmoded plays in affecting his thought, his many statements to the contrary notwithstanding. In 1663-64, before Etherege's play had appeared, Dryden had applied the term tragicomedy to *The Rival-Ladies*. After the appearance of *Love in a Tub* he applied that term only to plays which imitated *Love in a Tub's* duality of plot.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Works*, XV, 332.

<sup>17</sup> Preface "To the Reader" of *The Faithful Shepherdess*, *The Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*, II, 17.

<sup>18</sup> Later, when he came under the influence of Rymer, Dryden was less convinced of the excellence of these "English" tragicomedies and became, in his criticism, a convert to unity of plot. But it is another proof of his pragmatism as a dramatist, of his realization of the necessity of pleasing his audience, that he continued to write two-plot plays until the end, only taking care in his prefaces to defend himself from the critics. In the preface to *The Spanish Friar* he explains (*Works*, VI, 409) that he is breaking the rule of unity of action "for the pleasure of variety." In the preface to *Don Sebastian*

The chief indication that *Love in a Tub* influenced Dryden to produce his tragicomedies rests, however, on the similarity of the plan he followed to that of Etherege. *Love in a Tub* has one comic plot and one *heroic* plot. Nearly all the other two-plot tragicomedies which preceded Dryden, Shirley's, for instance, had had one comic and one merely *serious* plot. In this Dryden was certainly nearer to Etherege than to any one else.

It must be admitted, however, that no positive proof can be given that Dryden wrote the kind of tragicomedies he did because of the success of *Love in a Tub*. It can only be observed that this seems extremely likely, in view of the facts stated, especially of his ever-present responsiveness to public taste.

## II

Of the literary forces which influenced Dryden in his two-plot tragicomedies, the sources of the first one of them, *Secret Love or the Maiden Queen*, are especially important, for they helped influence the dramatic method that Dryden used, with modifications, in all his later dramas of the same type. In the following pages I shall try to show, first, what the sources were and the extent to which Dryden used them and, sec-

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he observes (*Works*, VII, 316) that the English "will not bear a thorough tragedy," and in the dedication to *Love Triumphant* he admits (*Works*, VIII, 375-376) that he has not precedent for his tragicomedies in the writings of the ancients, but says that he would often practice this "fault" if he were to write again, "because it is agreeable to the English genius." "We love variety," he adds, "more than any other nation, and so long as the audience will not be pleased without it, the poet is obliged to humor them." Two years earlier he had explained the failure of *Gleomenes* by its lack of a comic plot. "After all, it was a bold attempt of mine," he wrote in the preface to *Gleomenes* (*Works*, VIII, 220), "to write upon a single plot, unmixed with comedy; which, though it be the natural and true way, yet is not to the genius of the nation."

ondly, the probable influence of his chief sources on the *contrast* between the serious and comic plot in Dryden's first two tragicomedies.

The serious plot of *The Maiden Queen* was taken with surprisingly little change from Madeleine de Scudéry's *Artamène ou Le Grand Cyrus*.<sup>19</sup> Dryden has translated freely in parts, but he has translated nevertheless, and his addition of the revolution which Philocles and Lysimates lead against the queen at the end of the play is the only one of large importance in the serious plot. A discussion of the use Dryden made of the sources of the serious plot of this or of any other of the tragicomedies is not within the scope of this thesis. However, since Tüchert's discussion of this matter is inadequate,<sup>20</sup> parallel passages from Dryden and Scudéry have been given in Appendix A of this volume.

For important elements of the comic plot Dryden went to two French romances, Mlle Madeleine de Scudéry's *Artamène ou Le Grand Cyrus* and her *Ibrahim ou L'Illustre Bassa*.

The extent of the neglect of these sources is another illustration of how little serious study has been given to Dryden's

<sup>19</sup> Gerard Langbaine makes Dryden's sources clear. In his *Account of the English Dramatic Poets* (pp. 169-170) Langbaine says: "I . . . cannot pass by . . . his [Dryden's] making use of Bayes's Art of Transversing, as any One may observe by comparing the Fourth Stanza of his First Prologue, with the last Paragraph of the Preface to *Ibrahim*. As to the Contrivance of the Plot, the serious part of it is founded on the History of Cleobuline Queen of Corinth, Part 7. Book 2. The Characters of *Celadon*, *Florimel*, *Olinda*, and *Sabina* are borrowed from the Story of *Pusistrates* and *Cerintha* in the *Grand Cyrus*, Part 9. Book 3. and from the Story of the French Marquess in *Ibrahim*, Part 2. Book 1."

In his preface Dryden had admitted his debt to Mlle de Scudéry in the serious plot, but had said nothing about his debt to her in the comic plot.

<sup>20</sup> Aloys Tüchert, *John Dryden als Dramatiker in seinen Beziehungen zu Madeleine de Scudéry's Romandichtung*. Summers' discussion (*Dryden, The Dramatic Works*, II, 3) is much less adequate. Mr Summers dismisses the whole question with the observation, "Dryden has merely used the outline of the story, and it is hardly exaggeration to say that all that is valuable is his own." My Appendix A shows how incorrect this statement is.

comedies. Langbaine discovered the sources.<sup>21</sup> Scott and Saintsbury, however, did not have enough time or interest to ascertain their importance, and other students of Dryden have not, it seems, had more of either. Tüchert, though he did glance hastily at *Le Grand Cyrus* at Langbaine's suggestion, apparently started reading too far along in Tome IX, Livre 3, for he missed the part that Dryden took over, and noted only slight, unconvincing likenesses between the play and the romance,<sup>22</sup> and Scott's, Saintsbury's, and Tüchert's mistakes evidently misled Summers in his late edition of Dryden's plays.<sup>23</sup> No one who has written on the comedy of manners has been even aware of this part of Dryden's debt to French romances. Miss Kathleen Lynch, who wrote about the material that Dryden perhaps took from D'Urfé's *L'Astrée* (discussed later), missed the more important borrowings from *Le Grand Cyrus* and from *Ibrahim*. The extent of Dryden's debt to these two romances, therefore, has never been recognized.

Dryden's borrowing from *Le Grand Cyrus* is easily shown. The following is a quotation from Act II, Scene 1, of *The Maiden Queen*, with the passages from *Le Grand Cyrus*, which Dryden used, placed opposite:<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See p. 81, n 19.

<sup>22</sup> *Op cit*, pp. 17-19. The only likeness between *Le Grand Cyrus* and Dryden's comic plot that Tüchert could find had to do with Celadon's wooing of Olinda and Sabina. Tüchert felt that Celadon's inability to choose between the two ladies might be modeled on Pnystrate's inability to choose between his two mistresses. But this part of *The Maiden Queen* was obviously taken from *Ibrahim*, as is shown later in this volume (pp 86-87). The passage in *Le Grand Cyrus* has only vague resemblances to Dryden's scenes — it is not nearly so close to them as is *Ibrahim*.

<sup>23</sup> Montague Summers, *Dryden, The Dramatic Works*. See p 92, n 59.

<sup>24</sup> Madeleine de Scudéry, *Artamène ou Le Grand Cyrus*, Tome IX, Livre 3, pp. 948 ff. An English translation of *Le Grand Cyrus*, Englished by F. G. Esq. (2 vols., folio), appeared in London in 1653-54, but since there is no indication that Dryden used it, the original French is cited here. The same practice is followed with respect to *Ibrahim*. See pp. 87-90.

*Florimel:*

. . . if you are really in love,  
you have done me the greatest  
pleasure in the world.

[Cerinthe] . . . ie voudrois  
presque que ce que vous dittes  
fust vray: & que mesme vous  
m'aimassiez plus que personne  
n'a jamais aimé.<sup>25</sup>

*Geladon:*

That pleasure, *and a better*  
*too*,<sup>25</sup> I have in store for you.

*Florimel:*

This *animal*, call'd a lover,  
I have long'd to see these two  
years.

[Cerinthe] . . . aussi bien y  
a-t'il long temps que i'ay la  
curiosité de voir vn homme ef-  
fectiuement amoureux.<sup>27</sup>

*Geladon:*

Sure you walk'd with your  
mask on all the while, for if  
you had been seen, you could  
not have been without your  
wish.

[Pisistrate] Ha Madame, luy  
dit-il, vous n'estes guere sincèrel  
car il n'est pas possible que  
vous n'ayez point veû d'amans,  
puisque vous n'avez esté ny  
aveugle, ni invisible. . . .<sup>28</sup>

*Florimel:*

I warrant, you mean an or-  
dinary whining lover, but I  
must have other proofs of love,  
ere I believe it.

[Cerinthe] Ne pensez pas, luy  
dit-elle . . . que . . . ie veuille  
dire de ces Amans qui se le  
disent sans l'estre, puis que ce  
n'est pas de ceux-là qui i'ay en-  
vie de voir.<sup>29</sup>

*Geladon:*

You shall have the best that  
I can give you.

<sup>25</sup> As indicated below, italics are used to point out modifications in the source particularly characteristic of Dryden

<sup>26</sup> P 948.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>29</sup> P. 949



*Florimel:*

I would have a lover, that, if need be, should hang himself, drown himself, break his neck, poison himself, for very despair: He, that will scruple this, is an impudent fellow if he says he is in love.

*Celadon:*

Pray, madam, which of these four things would you have your lover to do? For a man's but a man; he cannot hang, and drown, and break his neck, and poison himself, all together.

*Florimel:*

Well, then, because you are but a beginner, and I would not discourage you, any of these shall serve your turn, in a fair way.

*Celadon:*

I am much deceived in those eyes of yours, if a treat, a song, and the fiddles, be not a more acceptable proof of love to you, than any of those tragical ones you have mentioned.

[Cerinthe] . . . i'entends, dit-elle, que si l'occasion s'en presente, on se tue, on se precipite, & on s'empoisonne de desespoir.<sup>80</sup>

[Pisistrate] Du moins, Madame . . . faut il que vous choisissiez vne de ces trois marques d'amour . . . car enfin . . . on ne peut pas se tuer, se precipiter, & s'empoisonner tout à la fois. . . .<sup>81</sup>

[Pisistrate] . . . & puis à dire la verité . . . il me semble qu'il y a trop de ioye dans vos yeux, pour vouloir des marques d'amour aussi tragiques que celles-là: & ie suis le plus trompé de tous les hommes, si vous ne prenez plus de plaisir a entendre vne Serenade qu'un Amant vous donneroit, qu'a en voir precipiter vn.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>80</sup> P 949.

<sup>81</sup> Pp. 949-950.

<sup>82</sup> P. 950.

*Florimel:*

However, you will grant it is but decent you should be pale, and lean, and melancholic, to show you are in love: And that I shall require of you when I see you next.

*Celadon:*

When you see me next? Why you do not make a rabbit of me to be lean at twenty-four hours' warning? in the meanwhile, we burn daylight, lose time and love.

*Florimel:*

Would you marry me without consideration?

*Celadon:*

*To choose, by heaven; for they that think on't, twenty to one they would never do it. Hang forcast! To make sure of one good night is as much in reason, as a man should expect from this ill world.*

*Florimel:*

Methinks, a few more years and discretion would do well. I do not like this going to bed so early; it makes one so weary before morning.

*Celadon:*

That's much as your pillow is laid, before you go to sleep.

[Cerinthe] . . . si ie voulois avoir vn Amant . . . ie voudrois que ce fust vn de ceux que i'entens: qu'il fust pasle, sombre, & chagrin; qu'il fust tousiours inquiet & resueur; & qu'il fust enfin le plus malheureux homme du monde.<sup>83</sup>

[Pisistrate] . . . mais . . . ne pensez pas que ie puisse estre maigre, pasle, sombre, & chagrin, en vingt-quatre heures.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>83</sup> P. 951.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

*Florimel:*

Shall I make a proposition to you? I will give you *a whole year* of probation to love me in; to grow reserved, discreet, sober, and faithful, and to pay me all the services of a lover.

[Cerinthe] . . . ie vous donne quinze jours pour devenir amoureux de moy, & quinze autres pour estre ce miserable Amant que ie veux voir par curiosité.<sup>35</sup>

I think it will be agreed that it is surprising to find characters in a French romance furnishing Dryden with this sort of dialogue. But one of the characters in Mlle de Scudéry's *Ibrahim*, from which Dryden drew other parts of his comic plot, is no less different from the ordinary concept of what is to be found in French romance.

Dryden apparently got the idea of having Celadon in love with Olinda and Sabina at the same time from the French Marquis of Tome II, Livre 1, of *Ibrahim*; <sup>36</sup> as Langbaine discovered,<sup>37</sup> both the Marquis and Celadon enjoy being iconoclasts in the religion of love. The Marquis, in fact, is much more of a nonconformist than is Celadon, for he has four mistresses <sup>38</sup> The Marquis "aimoit les yeux de l'une, la taille de l'autre, la voix de la troisieme, & l'esprit de la derniere," <sup>39</sup> just as Celadon loves "the tall singing one and the little innocent one." <sup>40</sup>

Celadon's flippant explanation of his love for both girls in the first scene of the play is undoubtedly modeled on that of

<sup>35</sup> Pp 951-952

<sup>36</sup> Madeleine de Scudéry, *Ibrahim ou L'illustre Bassa*, Tome II, Livre 1. This was Englished by Henry Cogan, Gent, and published in London in 1652, but the translation is so close to the French that there is no way of being sure whether Dryden used the translation or the original. The original has therefore been used for illustration here.

<sup>37</sup> See p 81, n. 19

<sup>38</sup> This is the only play in which Dryden *reduced* the number of characters in his source instead of multiplying them.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibrahim*, Tome II, Livre 1.

<sup>40</sup> *The Maiden Queen*, I, 1.

the Marquis (pp. 28 ff.) in both matter and spirit, but it is somewhat later that Dryden's use of the material is palpable enough for effective illustration. This is in Act IV, Scene 1, in which the mother of Olinda and Sabina examines each of her daughters, as the brother, Marsé, examines each of his four sisters, to find out which of them the young gallant, Celadon in the one case and the Marquis in the other, is in love with. Parallel passages made up of a part of this scene, and their sources in *Ibrahim*,<sup>41</sup> follow:

*Melissa:*

I must take this business up in time: This wild fellow begins to haunt my house again. Well, I'll be bold to say it, 'tis as easy to bring up a young lion without mischief, as a maiden-head of fifteen, to make it tame for an husband's bed. . . . Well, I'll examine them apart, and if I can find out which he loves, I'll offer him his choice. — Olinda, come hither, child.

Marsé se trouue lors assez em-pesché: il prend pourtant la resolution de s'en esclaircir, & il creut qu'entretenant toutes ses soeurs, chacune en particulier, il pourroit descouurir la verité: n'estant pas possible, disoit-il, que ie ne le remarque en l'air de leur visage, à laquelle il aura parlé d'amour serieusement. Il fait appeller l'aisnée dans son cabinet, . . . il l'assure qu'il ne songe à rien avec plus de soin, qu'à establir sa fortune . . . & enfin . . . il luy demande si le Marquis lui a donné quelques preuues particulieres de son affection. . . .<sup>42</sup>

*Olinda:*

Your pleasure, madam?

*Melissa:*

Nothing but for your good,  
Olinda; what think you of  
Celadon?

<sup>41</sup> *Ibrahim*, Tome II, Livre 1, pp. 33-48.

<sup>42</sup> Pp. 33-34.

*Olinda:*

Why, I think he's a very mad fellow; but yet I have some obligations to him: he teaches me new airs on the guitar, and talks wildly to me, and I to him.

[La Troisiesme] . . . elle re-  
plique en riant, que l'obliga-  
tion qu'elle luy a de luy auoir  
appris de si beaux airs . . .  
merite bien que sa response  
luy soit fauorable.<sup>43</sup>

*Melissa:*

But tell me in earnest, do  
you think he loves you?

Mais, luy dit Marsé il [*sic*]  
parle serieusement; & quoy que  
vous soyez la troisieme, si le  
Marquis vous aime, vous ne  
laisserez pas d'estre mariée la  
premiere.

*Olinda:*

Can you doubt it? There  
were never two so cut out for  
one another; we both love sing-  
ing, dancing, treats, and music.  
In short, we are each other's  
counterpart.

En pouuez-vous douter, luy  
dit-elle? & ne voyez-vous pas  
que la conformité qui est entre  
nous, a deu faire naistre une  
belle affection? Il est gay, ie  
ne suis pas melancholique, il  
sçait la Musique, & ie sçay  
chanter; . . . il dance admira-  
blement, & ie ne dance pas de  
mauuaise grace: enfin il y a  
encor ie ne sçay quoy d'inuisi-  
ble, que ie pense qu'on appelle  
sympathie, qui fait que nous ne  
sçaurions nous hair.<sup>44</sup>

*Melissa:*

But does he love you seri-  
ously?

Mais, reprit Marsé, ce n'est pas  
assez, & il faut que vous me  
disiez plus serieusement s'il  
vous aime. . . .<sup>45</sup>

*Olinda:*

Seriously? — I know not that;  
*if he did, perhaps I should not*

N'attendez rien de plus serieux  
de moy, dit-elle, ie cesserois

<sup>43</sup> Pp. 37-38.

<sup>44</sup> P. 38.

<sup>45</sup> Pp. 38-39.

love him:<sup>46</sup> But we sit and talk, and wrangle, and are friends; when we are together, we never hold our tongues; and then we have always a noise of fiddles at our heels; *he hunts me merrily, as the hound does the hare*; and either this is love or I know it not.

*Melissa:*

Well, go back, and call Sabina to me.

*(Olinda goes behind)*

This is a riddle past my finding out: Whether he loves her, or no, is the question, but this, I am sure of, she loves him: — O my little favourite,<sup>48</sup> I must ask you a question concerning Celadon: is he in love with you?

*Sabina:*

I think, indeed, he does not hate me, at least, if a man's word may be taken for it.

*Melissa:*

But what expressions has he made to you?

<sup>46</sup> Italics are used to indicate modifications in the source which are particularly characteristic of Dryden.

<sup>47</sup> P. 39

<sup>48</sup> Marsé also tells one of his sisters (the fourth) that he prefers her to the others.

<sup>49</sup> P. 37.

d'estre ce que ie suis, & peut-estre de plaïre au Marquis, si i'estois plus sage.<sup>47</sup>

Que sera-ce [misprint for ferai-  
ie?] (disoit Marsé en luy-mesme)  
que de tout cecy, Ie sçay [mis-  
print for *ne sçay*] encor si  
le Marquis est veritablement  
amoureux, & ie sçay toutesfois  
que i'ay desia deux soeurs  
que le sont esperduëment de  
luy. . . .<sup>49</sup>

[La Quatriesme] . . . répond  
. . . que bien estoit il vray que  
le Marquis avoit pris quelques  
soins particulieres d'elle, qui  
luy faisoit penser qu'il ne luy  
vouloit pas de mal.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Pp. 40-41.

*Sabina:*

Truly, the man has done his part: He has spoken civilly to me, and I was not so young but I understood him.

*Melissa:*

And you could be content to marry him?

*Sabina:*

I have sworn never to marry: besides he's a wild young man; yet, to obey you, mother, I would be content to be sacrificed.

Elle répond à cela avec beaucoup d'esprit, qu'elle s'estimeroit infiniment heureuse, d'être sacrifiée pour la félicité de son frere.<sup>51</sup>

Earlier in the play Celadon had defended his philosophy of love and life, saying:

Had I but one mistress, I might go to her to be merry, and she, perhaps, be out of humour, there were a visit lost. But here, if one of them frown upon me, the other will be the more obliging, on purpose to recommend her own gaiety.<sup>52</sup>

The Marquis had said:

. . . si ie n'en amois qu'une, lors qu'elle seroit en colere, ie serois sans consolation. ou [sic] tout au contraire ie ne suis iamais tout à fait mal heureux: si i'ay un peu fâché la blonde, la brune me regarde fauorablement & si ie suis mal avec la serieuse, la gaye me console par son humeur eniouée.<sup>53</sup>

These obvious indications of borrowings prove that Dryden used *Ibrahim*. It is important to note that many of Celadon's

<sup>51</sup> P 40. This precedes the last quotation in de Scudéry.

<sup>52</sup> *The Maiden Queen*, I, 1.

<sup>53</sup> Pp 47-48.

characteristics — some of them apparently typical of the Restoration — were borrowed from the character of this same Marquis. As will be shown later, Dryden did make some additions to that character, but in many important ways Celadon is no different from the Marquis. Not only does the latter love variety in mistresses, but he also hates marriage as much as Celadon does, calling it “ce destructeur de l'Amour . . . ce Tiran de la liberté . . . cét ennemy des plaisirs. . . .”<sup>54</sup> He even makes it a practice to explain to each new mistress that he does not intend to marry her<sup>55</sup> (Celadon imitates him in this when he first meets Florimel), and he insists that diversity of loves is as much to be desired as diversity of travels, tongues, and good books in rendering a man knowing.<sup>56</sup> It is interesting, too, that the Marquis hates particularly the country,<sup>57</sup> though Dryden did not imitate this trait in the character of Celadon.<sup>58</sup>

It may seem that the parallels between the comic portion of Dryden's play and its sources have been illustrated at unnecessary length, but it should be remembered that modern critics have not taken them seriously, though they were mentioned by Langbaine. Apparently Scott's and Saintsbury's failure to discuss them had the effect of throwing every-

<sup>54</sup> P 64.<sup>55</sup> Pp 69-70.<sup>56</sup> P 66<sup>57</sup> P. 27.

<sup>58</sup> Dryden's unwillingness to be original when he could translate is surprisingly illustrated by his borrowing of the fourth stanza of the prologue to *The Maiden Queen* from the last paragraph of the preface to *Ibrahim* (pointed out by Langbaine). Dryden wrote

“Plays are like towns, which, howe'er fortified  
By engineers, have still some weaker side,  
By the o'erseen defendant unespied.”

In *Ibrahim* (Tome I, preface, last paragraph) it was “. . . ie sçay qu'il est des ourages de cette nature, comme d'une place de guerre où quelque soin qu'ait apporté l'Ingenieur à la fortifier, il se trouue tousiours quelque endroit foible, où il n'a point songé, & par où on l'attaque . . .”



body off the track.<sup>59</sup> To combat so many authorities successfully illustration is necessary.<sup>60</sup>

It is possible that this is not the sum of the influence of French romances on *The Maiden Queen*. As has been noted, Miss Lynch observes that the proviso scene in Act V, Scene 1,

<sup>59</sup> In discussing the sources of *The Maiden Queen* Scott (*Works*, II, 415) observes disinterestedly. "Even our duty, as editors, cannot impel us to the task [of consulting *Le Grand Cyrus* and *Ibrahim*], satisfied, as we are, that, since these ponderous folios at that time loaded every toilette, Dryden can hardly have taken more from such well-known sources, than the mere outline of the story." Saintsbury apparently agreed with Scott, for he makes no correction of this statement other than saying: "Perhaps it should be added that there is no doubt about the indebtedness of the *serious part* of the plot to the '*Grand Cyrus*.' . . ."

As indicated above (p. 82), Montague Summers, though he has apparently glanced at Mlle de Scudéry's romance, follows Scott and Saintsbury in discrediting Langbaine. Mr. Summers says (*op cit.*, II, 4): ". . . to seek for Celadon and Florimel, Olinda and Sabina, in Pistratte, Cerinthe, Euridamic, Cleorante, is a mere carping flim. Celadon and Florimel are the lively creation of Dryden's genius."

In view of the proofs of borrowing I have just given, this statement from Mr. Summers, who is at times willing to illustrate and discuss at exhaustive length the slenderest indications of borrowing, is surprising.

Moreover, it is to be noted that, had Mr. Summers gone carefully into the question, he would have discovered that Olinda and Sabina were not thought by Langbaine to be from Euridamic and Cleorante of *Le Grand Cyrus* but, as I have shown, from the four sisters of *Ibrahim*.

<sup>60</sup> Dyce, in his edition of *Shirley* (II, 270), indicates that Dryden borrowed the scene in which Melissa questions her two daughters from *Shirley's Changes* or *Love in a Maze*, in which Goldsworth examines his two daughters to find out what man they are in love with and finds both in love with Gerard. This is a mistake. The scenes are only vaguely alike, and if Dyce had compared the scene in Dryden with the one in *Ibrahim* he would have seen that it was the source. Forsythe (*The Relations of Shirley's Plays to the Elizabethan Drama*, p. 35) observed, apropos of Dyce's statement, that the resemblance between the scene in Dryden and *Shirley* was "not a particularly striking one." Dyce got his information from Langbaine, but he misread that author. Langbaine says in his discussion of *Shirley's* play (*op cit.*, p. 477) that the scene of *Shirley* is "better manag'd in *The Maiden Queen*." Since Langbaine knew all about the use Dryden had made of *Ibrahim*, it does not seem likely that he means to indicate that the scene in *Shirley* is the source for the one in Dryden, rather, he merely wants to call attention to the resemblance between the two. Dyce, however, is angered at having Dryden preferred to *Shirley*, and takes considerable pains to show that Dryden has managed his "plagiarism" badly.

of the play is very much like one carried on by Hylas and Stelle, two witty, antiplatonic lovers in *L'Astrée* of Honoré D'Urfé.<sup>61</sup> She points out that "both contracts agree in their essential regulations (1) prohibiting jealousy, (2) sanctioning inconstancy, (3) safeguarding liberty of speech and action, and (4) abolishing terms of endearment between the contracting parties."<sup>62</sup>

It is certainly possible that Miss Lynch is correct in her claim that D'Urfé influenced Dryden, but her supposition that the influence is a direct one is *not* necessarily correct. For there are *no* verbal reminiscences of the contract of Hylas and Stelle in the contract of Celadon and Florimel, and we have seen that in this play at least Dryden did not hesitate to use the language of his sources.<sup>63</sup> It seems more likely, then, that Dryden employed some intermediary French source which was itself influenced by D'Urfé. Many such works existed, for, as Maurice Magendie has shown in his recent work on *L'Astrée*,<sup>64</sup> the effect of this romance on French literature after its publication (1607-27) was immense. It influenced English literature prior to Dryden, too. It might even be conjectured that the direct source of this part of Dryden's play was the Hylas of one of the lost plays of Roger Boyle, the

<sup>61</sup> Kathleen M. Lynch, "D'Urfé's *L'Astrée* and the 'Proviso' Scenes in Dryden's Comedy," *Philological Quarterly*, IV (1925), 302-308. Insufficient credit has been given to the Rev. Mr. W. Harvey-Jellie, who in 1906 briefly referred to the influence of *L'Astrée* on *The Maiden Queen* in his *Les Sources du théâtre anglais à l'époque de la Restauration*, p. 88.

Since I wrote this, Summers' edition of Dryden's dramas has appeared. Summers mentions (II, 4) the possible (he calls it "certain") debt of this part of *The Maiden Queen* to D'Urfé.

<sup>62</sup> Lynch, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

<sup>63</sup> Later, in the preface to *The Mock Astrologer* (*Works*, III, 251), Dryden said, "... I seldom use the ... language of any romance or play, which I undertake to alter," but enough has been shown here to prove that he did not live up to that statement.

<sup>64</sup> Maurice Magendie, *Du Nouveau sur l'Astrée* (Paris, 1927), pp. 428-462.

first Earl of Orrery, which he said was imitated from D'Urfé's *Hylas*.<sup>65</sup>

It also seems quite possible that Miss Lynch is mistaken in her claim <sup>66</sup> that the dialogue which immediately preceded the proviso speech in *The Maiden Queen* is directly imitated from a vaguely similar dialogue which has the same position (before the proviso speech) in *L'Astrée*.<sup>67</sup>

Dryden's use of French romances in writing the comic part of *The Maiden Queen* is of considerable significance. The witty, railing, emancipated lovers, Celadon and Florimel, have long been recognized to have been instrumental in the development of the comedy of manners. Now much of their railing and of their emancipation is seen to come, not altogether from contemporary life (as Palmer would suggest) or from earlier Caroline comedy (as Miss Lynch, despite the

<sup>65</sup> Of his second play (now lost) Orrery wrote to the Duke of Ormond "The humour of *Hylas* [*sic*], of which your grace will see some touches in the beginning of the second act, shall be interwoven, if your grace dislike it not, in every one of the three remaining; though I despair to make my *Hylas* as famous on the theatre, as the Marquis of Urfe has made his in the romance; for besides his genius being exceedingly above mine, his *Hylas* was not limited to numbers and rhyme, as mine is" (*A Collection of the State Letters of the Right Honourable Roger Boyle, The First Earl of Orrery* [Dublin, 1743], I, 77).

<sup>66</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 304-305.

<sup>67</sup> The dialogue which preceded Dryden's proviso speeches seems less near to that which preceded the proviso in D'Urfé than it is to a similar dialogue in *Ibrahim*, Tome II, Livre 1, pp. 28 ff. In *L'Astrée* Sylvandre suggests the names of a long list of shepherdesses as fitting mistresses for *Hylas*, and *Hylas* explains what is wrong with each. The dialogue in Dryden's play differs from this in that in it laudable qualities are first shown to be in each mistress, and these are then shown to be more than balanced by her faults. In this, Dryden's play is like the conversation cited in *Ibrahim*. In the latter the Marquis is explaining to Alsac why he is not in love with any of the four sisters of Marsé, balancing the good qualities of each of them with her faults. Moreover, the statement in Dryden's play that one young lady is too tall and another too short seems to have come from the Marquis' speech; for in *L'Astrée* all the faults of the various mistresses are faults of temperament, rather than of physique. Finally, it should be noted that it has been shown that in this play Dryden used other parts of the story of the Marquis.

fact that she herself pointed out the influence of *L'Astrée*, would suggest), but from the literature most antithetical on the whole to the spirit of Restoration comedy, French romances. These French romances will have to be listed, then, as sources of the comedy of manners.

Although anyone must concede that Pisistrate and the Marquis are surprisingly in the spirit of Restoration comedy (and it seems astounding that some one of the many Dryden scholars who have read Langbaine has not already pointed it out), it is obvious that Dryden has made important additions to what he borrowed which are even more in the spirit of the times. In the first place, these French gallants are not physically promiscuous.<sup>68</sup> They are heretics against the conventions of *préciosité*, but their inconstancy is merely inconstancy of the soul. Even the Marquis, whose dislike of marriage is developed at length, gives no indication that he enjoys any extra-marital bliss beyond that of railing.

For his Restoration audience, however, Dryden dared make Celadon more overt in his transgression of the laws of the *précieuses*. Celadon believes in fornication. When, in Act IV, Scene 1, Florimel reproaches herself for having taken "a wench's" word, he exclaims:

A wench's word! — Why should you speak so contemptibly of the better half of mankind? I'll stand up for the honour of my vocation.

And when, in the same scene, help is needed to support Philocles, Celadon says:

I know a score or two of madcaps here hard by, whom I can pick up from taverns, and gaming-houses, and bordels; those I'll bring to aid him. — Now, Florimel, there's an argument for wenching: Where would you have had so many honest men together, upon the sudden, for a brave employment?

<sup>68</sup> Nor is Hylas.

Finally, when, still later in the same scene, Celadon and his friends enter "unbuttoned and reeling" to overcome Lysimantes, who calls them "ruffians," Celadon, outraged, retorts: ". . . Ruffians, quoth a'! call gamesters, whoremasters, and drunkards, ruffians!" Dryden is here obviously pleasing his English audience by taking hints from the wenchers of Beaumont and Fletcher, as he had done in *The Wild Gallant*.

This difference between Dryden's gallant and his prototypes continues throughout. His French models for Celadon never mention the fact that the physical side of sex exists. Celadon allows us to forget it as seldom as did the heroes of Beaumont and Fletcher's comedies. This is particularly noticeable when the part of Dryden's dialogue which was taken from *Le Grand Cyrus* is compared with its original.<sup>69</sup>

Even more important are the additions Dryden made in the character of Florimel. Cerinthe of *Le Grand Cyrus* had been as emancipated as her gallant,<sup>70</sup> but to make Florimel as emancipated as Celadon Dryden had to increase her wildness greatly over that of any of the characters in his sources; for the Marquis who gave Dryden so many ideas for the character of

<sup>69</sup> On pages 83, 85, and 86 I have italicized Dryden's additions to what he borrowed from *Le Grand Cyrus* which illustrate this point. The dialogue which ends the play, and which is all Dryden's, is a better illustration. Nicoll (*A History of Restoration Drama*, p. 22) is shocked at these additions. "Turn . . . to Dryden's *Secret Love*" [the other title of *The Maiden Queen*], he writes, "and read the words of Celadon and Florimel: in spite of the wit, we stand aghast. That such conversation as appears in the fifth act of this play—and it is evidently realistic—could ever have taken place between two cultured persons in a civilized society, . . . shows us probably as clearly as anything the peculiar temper of the age with which we are dealing." Except for the fact that the coarseness of the language of this play is no greater than that of several plays written before 1642, this statement is correct. A certain amount of coarseness is characteristic of the dramas of the age. But what distinguishes them chiefly from the comedies of Beaumont and Fletcher and of their later contemporaries is the grace which is combined with the coarseness. And most of the grace in the raillery of Celadon and Florimel can be traced to Dryden's French sources.

<sup>70</sup> This was also true of Stelle of *L'Astrée*.

Celadon had had no female counterpart in *Ibrahim*. And Dryden has made Florimel more than the equal of Celadon. Like Lady Constance of *The Wild Gallant*, she directs the action of the comic plot, does most of the wooing herself, and is more witty than her gallant. She is not embarrassed by Celadon's frankness and even answers him in kind.<sup>71</sup> She is far different from Cerinthe, who insisted:

. . . ie veux que la raillerie soit galante & mesme un peu malicieuse; mais ie veux qu'elle soit modeste, & delicate; qu'elle ne blesse, ny les oreilles, ny l'imagination; & qu'elle ne face iamais rougir que de despit.<sup>72</sup>

In fact, unless some new source for her character is found (and that is always possible in the work of Dryden, who borrowed so widely) Florimel's character should be credited pretty largely to the author's own invention. The advance that Lady Constance of *The Wild Gallant* made over her predecessors in English drama has already been discussed. Florimel continues what Lady Constance began. Moreover, she sustains her side of the combats of wit much better than did her predecessor. She still lacks the grace and the complete sophistication that Doralice of *Marriage à la Mode* is to have, but she is a sign that growth was taking place in her creator.

Nicoll's theory that Hart and Nell Gwyn were the originals of Dryden's pairs of witty lovers, though shown to be impossible so far as *The Wild Gallant* was concerned,<sup>73</sup> squares a little better with the facts which we know about this play; for it is possible, as Saintsbury claims,<sup>74</sup> that Celadon's second

<sup>71</sup> *The Maiden Queen*, V, 1 (*Works*, II, 489). Here Florimel jokingly suggests that Celadon has suffered from venereal disease. Later in the same scene (*Works*, II, 507) she threatens to make him a cuckold.

<sup>72</sup> *Le Grand Cyrus*, Tome IX, Livre 3, p. 974.

<sup>73</sup> See Chapter I, p. 42.

<sup>74</sup> *Works*, II, 416. Ward (*A History of English Dramatic Literature*, III, 351) says that Florimel was "evidently drawn from real life."

description of the masked Florimel in Act I, Scene 2, is a description of Nell herself:

A turned-up nose, that gives an air to your face: . . . a full nether lip, an out-mouth, that makes mine water at it; the bottom of your cheeks a little blub, and two dimples when you smile. . . .<sup>75</sup>

These fat cheeks and full lips are discernible in all Nell's portraits. The turned-up nose is often not represented, but it is in one of the best of them, the one by Lely in the Hanfstaengl collection, in which Nell is caressing a lamb with her left hand.<sup>76</sup>

If the part of Florimel was written with Nell Gwyn in mind, the perfection of her acting in the rôle is not surprising. Pepys was never pleased by her acting of tragic parts, but he could not say enough in praise of her in this play. When he saw it at its opening on Saturday, March 2, 1666/7, he wrote in his *Diary*:

After dinner, with my wife, to the King's house to see "The Maiden Queene," a new play of Dryden's, mightily commended for the regularity of it, and the strain and wit; and the truth is, there is a comical part done by Nell, which is Florimell, that I never can hope ever to see the like done again, by man or woman.

<sup>75</sup> Etherege's *Sir Fopling Flutter* has a similar sketch of Harriet (I, 1), and such descriptions are thereafter to be found quite often in Restoration comedy. Dryden has several of them, the one of Elvira in *The Spanish Friar* (I, 2) is a good example. Apparently they are descriptions of the women who first appeared in the parts. They are different from the old Jonsonian delineations of character which were given before the one depicted first came on the stage (and which were also used strikingly by Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve, and Dryden), for they concern themselves with physical features and would have been obviously ridiculous if the actor or actress who took the part had not tallied with the description. This, however, is not altogether true of the word portrait cited above, since it is given as an imaginary picture of Florimel by Celadon when as yet he has seen her only in her mask.

<sup>76</sup> Reproduced opposite page 16 of Cecil Chesterton's *The Story of Nell Gwyn* (Boston, 1912). In this excellent painting Nell is "all unready," as she was when Pepys saw her at the door of her lodgings in Drury Lane on May 1, 1667.

The King and Duke of York were at the play. But so great performance of a comical part was never, I believe, in the world before as Nell do this, both as a mad girl, then most and best of all when she comes in like a young gallant; and hath the motions and carriage of a spark the most that ever I saw any man have.<sup>77</sup> It makes me, I confess, admire her.<sup>78</sup>

But whether it was partly inspired by Nell Gwyn or not, it is obvious that there are important elements in the character of Florimel which could not have come out of the French romances from which Dryden has been shown to have borrowed. The part which Nell acted so well, according to Pepys — the scene in which she disguised herself as a “spark” to follow, spy upon, and make sure of the capture of her gallant — though it contains a device that had been common enough since long before Shakespeare’s *Rosalind*, seems here to be Dryden’s own; in the initiative and degree of emancipation it gives to the heroine it is better than anything in earlier plays.<sup>79</sup> That Dryden was sensible of the success of this addition is indicated by the fact that he repeated the device the next year in *The Mock Astrologer*; and in *Marriage à la Mode* he used it in double measure, having both Melantha and Doralice masquerade as gallants.

<sup>77</sup> In V, 1, Dryden has Florimel describe herself in her male disguise in a way that may indicate that he agreed with Pepys about Nell’s acting of the part. She is soliloquizing. “If clothes and a *bon mien* will take them, I shall do it. — Save you, Monsieur Florimel! Faith, methinks you are a very jaunty fellow, *poudré et ajusté*, as well as the best of ‘em. I can manage the little comb; set my hat, shake my garniture, toss about my empty noddle, walk with a courrant slur, and at every step peck down my head. If I should be mistaken for some courtier now, pray where’s the difference?”

<sup>78</sup> Pepys saw *The Maiden Queen* nine times and liked it better each time. He praised the comic plot and Nell’s part in it most highly, but he liked the serious plot also.

<sup>79</sup> Of course, the use of the device is quite different here from what it had been in Shakespeare’s play. *Rosalind* did not pretend to be a gallant; nor did Honoria and Angelina in Dryden’s *Rival-Ladies*.



## III

Although, as has been shown, Dryden had abundant precedent in English drama for making *The Maiden Queen* a two-plot tragicomedy, it seems very likely that it was the French romances from which he borrowed that determined the character of the contrast between the two plots of his play. Pisistrate, Cerinthe, and the Marquis, and Hylas and Stelle had all been introduced into the stories in which they occurred to provide a foil for the serious characters of the romances, and Dryden's Celadon and Florimel served the same purpose. It even seems very likely that some of the characteristics of Celadon and Florimel which were most important in the development of Dryden's best high comedy, his comedy of manners, so far as he wrote it, recommended themselves to him largely because they would afford the same kind of contrast to the serious part of the drama as he had found in *Le Grand Cyrus*, *Ibrahim*, and *L'Astrée*; that is, that he took his greatest steps forward in high comedy, not for the sake of the comedy itself, but because he wanted to set off the tragic plot of the tragicomedy in which it occurred.<sup>80</sup> In support of this suggestion, at least, it may be noted that Dryden's first completely drawn witty lovers appeared in his first two-plot tragicomedy; and that they were not improved, in spite of the fact that *The Mock Astrologer* intervened, until his second tragicomedy of the same type, *Marriage à la Mode*. If this is

<sup>80</sup> One indication that Dryden was more interested in the serious plot of *The Maiden Queen* than in the comic plot is that he placed the setting in Sicily — not in London, as he would have if he had been chiefly interested in copying contemporary smart life. For the same reason all his other tragicomedies have exotic settings in Sicily, Spain, and Portugal. Sedley's greater preoccupation with his contemporaries is seen in his having taken Dryden's witty lovers out of their romantic setting and in his having placed them in contemporary London, as V. De Sola Pinto observes, *Sir Charles Sedley* (London, 1927), p. 261.

true it adds considerably to the debt Dryden's comedies owe these romances.

Let us see how Dryden's use of this contrast compares with that of Mlle de Scudéry and le sieur D'Urfé in the three romances in question. It seems certain that Pisistrate and Cerinthe and the Marquis and Hylas and Stelle are intended to accentuate the perfection of the more important "platonian" characters in their stories by breaking all the rules that these serious people have been discussing and supporting and illustrating in hundreds of pages of graceful debate.<sup>81</sup> To make the contrast more amusing, they follow in their railery the same form as do the platonic discussions of their serious fellows. In the same way Celadon and Florimel make it their chief business in life to flout the things that the heroic characters of the play, the Queen and Philocles, hold most sacred. The Queen struggles nobly between love and honor and finally sacrifices love for honor, and Philocles sacrifices power and glory for love,<sup>82</sup> both acting as did their antecedents in *Le Grand Cyrus*, but Celadon and Florimel care as little for honor or for love in the heroic sense as Dryden and his French sources could make them. To accentuate the contrast, Dryden took the name of his comic hero, Celadon, from the most serious and perfect pattern of a lover in *L'Astrée*. He has also heightened the burlesque of *précieuse* conventions by raising from four weeks to a year<sup>83</sup> the period of probation which Florimel imposes on her lover.

<sup>81</sup> This was not a novel device. Bembo in *Il Cortegiano* acted as the same sort of foil for the platonic lovers.

<sup>82</sup> When the Queen forbids Philocles to marry Candiope, he cries (II, i) ·  
 "I cannot live without Candiope,  
 But I can die, without a murmur,  
 Having my doom pronounced from your fair mouth"

It will be noted that this part of the serious plot is in blank verse, but other parts (III, 1, *Works*, II, 455, for instance) are in heroic couplets. The comic plot, of course, is in prose. <sup>83</sup> *The Maiden Queen*, II, 1. See p. 86.

Miss Lynch has already pointed out that the Restoration comedy of manners owes some of its character to the fact that its "similitude debates and contests in raillery" burlesque *préciosité* by following the form of its arguments but reversing its sentiments,<sup>84</sup> by praising promiscuity instead of constancy, sexual excess instead of chastity, by being, if I may coin a phrase, mock-*précieuse*. Bonamy Dobrée makes a like suggestion, without Miss Lynch's exaggeration of the importance of English platonic drama, when he insists that the galants of the Restoration stage were trying to rationalize the artificial sex ethics which they found in the heroic play as well as the sex ethics of the Puritan middle class of their own England.<sup>85</sup> But the importance of the tragicomedy in fostering such elements in the developing comedy of manners has not, so far as I know, ever been mentioned.

The contrast between the "ethos" of Dryden's serious and comic plots in his tragicomedies has, in fact, sometimes been pointed out as evidence of Dryden's *carelessness* in putting his plays together. B. J. Pendlebury<sup>86</sup> has taken this view of the matter and has explained that the lack of homogeneity in the two plots kept Dryden from fusing them together better than he did. According to Mr. Pendlebury, "the heroic and comic characters are carefully distinguished, so that there shall be no danger of the heroes' being tried by the standard of comedy." This statement indicates that its author failed to understand what effect Dryden was trying to produce. It is incorrect, moreover, in that it does not take account of Dryden's continual regrets because his plots were not carefully connected.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Kathleen M. Lynch, *The Social Mode of Restoration Comedy*, Chapter IV

<sup>85</sup> Bonamy Dobrée, *Restoration Comedy*, p. 20. He does not develop the idea.

<sup>86</sup> B. J. Pendlebury, *Dryden's Heroic Plays*, p. 104.

<sup>87</sup> Dryden apparently felt that he had been successful in joining the two plots of only one of his tragicomedies, *Don Sebastian*. He claimed in the

The contrast between the two plots of *The Maiden Queen* was continued in the later tragicomedies. In the last three of them, for reasons which will be discussed later, Dryden gave up his witty, urbane, high-comedy characters and turned to low comedy in his comic plots, but in *Marriage à la Mode* the effect of the contrast is of the same kind (though increased because the comic characters are much improved) as in *The Maiden Queen*.

An example from *Marriage à la Mode* will indicate the effect of Dryden's contrast. The following conversation occurs between Leonidas, the rightful heir to the throne, and Palmyra, the daughter of the usurper. As is so often the case in heroic plays, Palmyra loves Leonidas, but refuses to marry him because "honour" makes it necessary for her to obey her father's command to the contrary:

*Palmyra:*

Man's love may, like wild torrents, overflow;  
Woman's as deep, but in its banks must go.  
My love is mine, and that I can impart;  
But cannot give my person, with my heart.

*Leonidas:*

Your love is then no gift:  
For, when the person it does not convey,  
'Tis to give gold, and not to give the key.

*Palmyra:*

Then ask my father.

*Leonidas:*

He detains my throne;  
Who holds back mine, will hardly give his own.

*Palmyra:*

What then remains?

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preface to this play (*Works*, VII, 316) that the comic part was "of a piece and . . . depending on the serious part of the design," though, as has been noted, this dependence is not great.

*Leonidas:*

That I must have recourse  
To arms, and take my love and crown, by force.  
Hermogenes is forming the design,  
And with him all the brave and loyal join.

*Palmyra:*

And is it thus you court Palmyra's bed?  
Can she the murderer of her parent wed?  
Desist from force. So much you well may give  
To love, and me, to let my father live.

*Leonidas:*

Each act of mine my love to you has shown;  
But you, who tax my want of it, have none.  
You bid me part with you, and let him live;  
But they should nothing ask, who nothing give.

*Palmyra:*

I give what virtue, and what duty can,  
In vowing ne'er to wed another man.

*Leonidas:*

You will be forced to be Argaleon's wife.

*Palmyra:*

I'll keep my promise, though I lose my life.

*Leonidas:*

Then you lose love, for which we both contend;  
For life is but the means, but love's the end.<sup>88</sup>

The contrast between the "ethos" of this scene and that of the following scene, in which the characters of the comic plot of *Marriage à la Mode* take part, is extreme. Palamede is soliloquizing:

*Palamede.* . . . last night I had a sweet dream of her, and, gad, she I have once dreamed of, I am stark mad till I enjoy her, let her be never so ugly.

(*Enter Doralice*)

<sup>88</sup> *Marriage à la Mode*, IV, 5.

*Doralice:* Who's that you are so mad to enjoy, Palamede?

*Palamede:* You may easily imagine that, sweet Doralice.

*Doralice:* More easily than you think I can. . . . I am given to understand, that to-morrow you are to take an oath in the church to be grave henceforward, to go ill-dressed and slovenly, to get heirs for your estate, and to dandle them for your diversion, and, in short, that love and courtship are to be no more.

*Palamede:* Now have I so much shame to be thus apprehended in the manner, that I can neither speak nor look upon you; I have abundance of grace in me, that I find: But if you have any spark of true friendship in you, retire with me a little into the next room, that hath a couch or bed in it,<sup>89</sup> and bestow your charity upon a dying man! A little comfort from a mistress, before a man is going to give himself in marriage, is as good as a lusty dose of strongwater to a dying malefactor: it takes away the sense of hell and hanging from him.

*Doralice:* No, good Palamede, I must not be so injurious to your bride: 'Tis ill drawing from the bank to-day, when all your ready money is payable to-morrow.

*Palamede:* A wife is only to have the ripe fruit, that falls of itself; but a wise man will always preserve a shaking for a mistress.<sup>90</sup>

Those who say that Dryden was careless in putting together in the same play characters and situations so effectively antithetical as these are blind, I think, to one of the best evidences of his careful craftsmanship. The extent to which

<sup>89</sup> This line, in which Palamede comes directly to the point, was possibly suggested by the lines in Shirley's *Lady of Pleasure*, V, 1. In that scene Fredrick, intoxicated both with wine and with the novelty of playing the gallant, says to Lady Bornwell

"You have a couch or palett, I can shut  
The chamber door"

Not only are the proposals the same, but the suddenness with which both are advanced is similar.

<sup>90</sup> *Marriage à la Mode*, V, 1. It is interesting to compare the last speech of this quotation with lines 297-300 of the second seduction of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*.

he has heightened both the extremes in such passages indicates that the contrast was purposeful and not a matter of slovenly practice. It shows that Dryden still felt as he had done when he made Neander, in his defense of tragicomedy in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, insist that "contraries, when placed near, set off each other."<sup>91</sup>

#### IV

Before continuing with the discussion of the stuff out of which Dryden's plays were made, let us consider the question of his contribution to the developing comedy of manners. This question has been mentioned often by critics, but no one has balanced Dryden's limitations as a writer of comedy of manners with his excellences. Nor has anyone compared his contribution with that of others equally early in the field. I shall do these things before taking up the play which has always been considered Dryden's greatest contribution to the artificial comedy of his age, *Marriage à la Mode*.

In the discussion of *The Wild Gallant* I echoed the belief of many critics that in a few scenes Loveby and Lady Constance, with the able assistance of Isabelle, achieved a grace in their combats of wit that suggested, faintly at least, the later ones to be found in the plays of Etherege and Congreve.<sup>92</sup> In *The Maiden Queen* there is no doubt about the importance of the raillery of Celadon and Florimel as a contribution to later and greater comedies of manners, particularly in view of Florimel's equality with her adversary in this combat. I have shown that Dryden's source for this play was not primarily the gentlemen and ladies of contemporary London, that they did not act as models for what in this play was in the manners vein, but that it was in choosing material from his

<sup>91</sup> *Works*, XV, 331-332.

<sup>92</sup> See pp. 30-31.

sources which would please these gentlemen and ladies and in adapting it to them that he came to produce the play he did.

This is not to say, however, that either of these plays, or any one of the later plays of Dryden, is a full-fledged comedy of manners. Dryden never wrote any such; the most he can be said to have done is to have made suggestions and contributed devices to those who did.

Dryden's deviations from the conventions of the comedy of manners are few but serious. In the first place, none of his plays, except the farcical, satirical *Mr. Limberham*, gives us any of the atmosphere of Restoration London. It is true that *The Wild Gallant* is laid in London, but there is nothing to distinguish it from the London of Ben Jonson. *The Maiden Queen* and *Marriage à la Mode* are laid in Sicily, *The Mock Astrologer* is laid in Spain, part of the humor of the manners characteristics of the comic plots of these dramas lies in the contrast between them and their romantic setting. Celadon and Wildblood and Palamede have something of the grace and ease and morals of Dorimant and Horner and Mirabel, but they do not go to Longs or Locketts, walk in Mulberry-Garden, or along Whetstone's Park, or mention the names of fashionable Restoration bordels.

Secondly, except for their attitude toward love and their methods of amorous pursuit, Dryden's comic characters, even those in the plays mentioned as being most important in the development of comedy-of-manners conventions, have few of the special interests of contemporary courtiers and gentlemen outside of love. They almost never mention their clothes, they do not gossip about the town and Court, and they are not interested in wit and the making of witty similitudes for their own sake.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Palamede and Rhodophil do use similitudes as a part of the love game. It must be admitted, too, that *now and then* they follow the taste of the times



Of course, one reason for this last limitation which excludes Dryden's comedies from the manners group, is the lack of would-be wits in his plays, for it is not the true wits, the Dorimants and Mirabels, who are most interested in gloves, wigs, and garniture and in the making of similitudes, but the would-be's, the Sir Fopling Flutterers and the Witwounds. The absence of such characters from Dryden's plays is one of many indications that he did not feel at home in smart Restoration society.<sup>94</sup> True wit he could hear in the conversation of his friends, Sedley, Rochester, Dorset, and Etherege, but to become *well* acquainted<sup>95</sup> with those who made themselves ri-

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and make similitudes out of a pure love of cleverness. In I, 1, for instance, Palamede says "... you must get a mistress, Rhodophil. That, indeed, is living upon cordials, but, as fast as one fails, you must supply it with another. You're like a gamester who has lost his estate, yet, in doing that, you have learned the advantages of play, and can arrive to live upon't." And a few lines farther down Rhodophil describes Melantha by a series of comparisons. These expressions are possibly an indication of the influence of Wycherley's *Love in a Wood*, in which Dapperwit had lately carried the similitude habit to amazing lengths.

<sup>94</sup> In the dedication of *Marriage à la Mode* to Rochester (*Works*, IV, 254) Dryden shows that his feeling about the would-be's was too serious for successful satire. He says "In my little experience of a court (which, I confess, I desire not to improve), I have found in it much of interest, and more of detraction. Few men there have that assurance of a friend, as not to be made ridiculous by him when they are absent. There are a middling sort of courtiers, who become happy by their want of wit, but they supply that want by an excess of malice to those who have it. And there is no such persecution as that of fools. They can never be considerable enough to be talked of themselves, so that they are safe only in their obscurity, and grow mischievous to witty men, by the great diligence of their envy, and by being always present to represent and aggravate their faults. In the meantime, they are forced, when they endeavor to be pleasant, to live on the offals of their wit whom they decry, and either to quote it (which they do unwillingly), or to pass it upon others for their own." This is a portrait of the kind of person from which Dapperwit of Wycherley's *Love in a Wood* had been imitated. Wycherley shows that he "belongs" by refusing to take Dapperwit seriously, and with Congreve's Tattle and Witwound the last traces of anger are gone from the satire.

<sup>95</sup> Dryden knew, of course, that such people existed, that is shown by the preceding note. In the dedication to *The Assignment* (*Works*, IV, 374) he explains that he does not know them well.

diculous by unsuccessful attempts to imitate these gentlemen, he would have had to frequent drawing rooms and boudoirs, an amusement for which he apparently had neither inclination nor time. Had he been interested in portraying pretenders to gentility, he had an excellent opportunity for doing so in *Sir Martin Mar-all*, but, as we shall see when that play is discussed, Sir Martin's affectations are largely those of his French original. As an English would-be he is not in the same class with those whose portraits were given us by later dramatists. This lack of would-be's in Dryden's plays is striking, for the ability to produce them was particularly widespread at this time.<sup>96</sup>

In the elements which Dryden did contribute to the comedy of manners, however, there is little doubt about his precedence. Etherege, later to be the first producer of the fully developed type of the genre, made in *Love in a Tub* no startling advance over scores of pre-Restoration plays, in spite of the fact that it was produced the year after *The Wild Gallant*. Etherege's *She Wou'd If She Cou'd*, worthy to be called the first comedy of manners,<sup>97</sup> appeared almost a year later than Dryden's *Maiden Queen*, and Sedley's *Mulberry-Garden* came three months after *She Wou'd If She Cou'd*. The grace and wit and ease of Celadon and Florimel — and particularly of Florimel, since the fact that the woman is as emancipated as the man is important — are worthy of mention in any discussion of the early growth of the comedy of manners.

It should be pointed out, too, that in *Marriage à la Mode* there is some of the Restoration's best comedy of situation

<sup>96</sup> In Sedley's *Mulberry-Garden* (1668), for instance, Jack Wildish and Olivia, Sedley's truly fashionable lovers, are not very well done, but his would-be's, Estridge and Modish, are surprisingly good.

<sup>97</sup> But even in *She Wou'd If She Cou'd* the pursuit as such is not emphasized as it is in Dryden. Moreover, Ariana and Gatty won't play the game with the initiative of men, as do Florimel of *The Maiden Queen*, Doralice of *Marriage à la Mode*, and Jacintha of *The Mock Astrologer*.

used in a comedy-of-manners atmosphere. That is, the situation is interesting not for its own sake, as it would be in a comedy of intrigue, but for the witty manners talk it produces.<sup>98</sup> In arranging this situation Dryden is much more able than were the other writers of manners comedy. Even Etherege brings his gallants and ladies together rather mechanically.<sup>99</sup>

## V

Before *Marriage à la Mode* was produced other important comedies had appeared. The month following the first performance of Sedley's *Mulberry-Garden* (June, 1668) Dryden's *Mock Astrologer*, in which Celadon and Florimel were continued in Wildblood and Jacintha, opened. Wycherley's *Love in a Wood*<sup>100</sup> was put on in the early part of 1671, and his *Gentleman Dancing-Master* very early in 1672. The advent of Shadwell's *Epsom-Wells* (1672),<sup>101</sup> proof in itself that Shadwell had lost the contempt he had expressed for Dryden's witty lovers in the preface to *The Sullen Lovers*,<sup>102</sup> indicated that the Restoration comedy of manners had arrived.

In view of Dryden's practice up to this time it might be expected that his next comedy would be written on the plan of

<sup>98</sup> See especially III, 2, where Palamede, Doralice, Rhodophil, and Melantha all meet outside the grotto

<sup>99</sup> Ariana, Gatty, Courtall, and Freeman seem to be playing about merely so that they may talk. The situation does not seem to produce their wit

<sup>100</sup> In spite of Ward's claim in his critical preface to *Love in a Wood* (Mermaid Edition, p. 5) to the contrary, there seems to be no doubt that Wycherley's first play was influenced in its general form and spirit by Sedley's *Mulberry-Garden*. Ward's chief argument against such influence is Wycherley's ridiculous claim that he wrote this play before 1660 while still in his teens! Macaulay's arguments (*ibid.*, p. xxv) are enough to disprove this claim.

<sup>101</sup> These dates are taken from Nicoll's valuable hand-list of Restoration plays, *op. cit.*, Appendix C

<sup>102</sup> *The Sullen Lovers* had been published in 1668.

these late successes. But it is not.<sup>108</sup> In spite of his now having abundant models before him, he did not go over to the new school. *Marriage à la Mode* follows the plan laid down in *The Maiden Queen*. It is a tragicomedy, like its predecessor. In it, as in *The Maiden Queen*, the witty lovers are required by the serious plot to carry on their raillery in Sicily, and they have the same kind of connection with the serious plot that Celadon and Florimel had had. The men are courtiers — Palamede, like Celadon, has just returned from his travels — and the women have positions in Court society about like that of Florimel.

After the success which rewarded the examination of the hitherto unverified suggestions that Langbaine had given concerning the sources of *The Maiden Queen*, his information about *Marriage à la Mode* seems full of promise:

The Serious Part is founded on the Story of *Sesostris* and *Timareta* in the *Grand Cyrus*, Part 9, Book 3 [sic], and the Characters of *Palamede* and *Rhodophil*, from the same Romance, Par. 6, Bk. 1. See the History of *Timantes* and *Parthenia*. I might mention also the Story of *Nogaret* in the *Annals of Love* from whence part of the Character of *Doralice* was possibly borrow'd: and *Les Contes D'Ouville partie premiere*, p. 13, from whence the Fancy of *Melantha's* making Court to her self in *Rhodophil's* Name is taken, but this is usual with our Poet.<sup>104</sup>

To dispose of the serious part of the play first, there is no doubt about the importance of the source given for it, though

<sup>108</sup> However, the excellent four-sided conversation between Ariana, Gatty, Courtall, and Freeman in *She Wou'd If She Cou'd* may have suggested his increasing the one pair of lovers to two. Dryden has managed this even better than did Ftherege, and in other ways has made great improvements on what he had done in his earlier plays

After *Marriage à la Mode* had appeared, Shadwell, too, increased his witty lovers from one to two pairs. *The Sullen Lovers* had had one pair, Lovell and Carolina (Standord and Emilia are not witty lovers, they are humours). *Epsom-Wells* (December, 1672) had two pairs, Bevil and Carolina, and Rains and Lucia. *The Virtuoso* (1676) had two pairs also, Bruce and Miranda, and Longvil and Clarinda.

<sup>104</sup> *Op cit*, p. 166.

the story of "Sesostris and Timareta" is in Tome VI, Livre 2, of *Le Grand Cyrus*, and not in IX, 3. Whether or not it was this incorrect reference that led Saintsbury astray is impossible to say. Certainly his statement,<sup>105</sup> "As before, commentators have endeavoured to assign chapter and verse for the different scenes of the play, but quite idly," proves that he never actually found and read the story of "Sesostris and Timareta." For there is no doubt about it; this source is surely the true one. When Saintsbury reëdited the play for The Mermaid Series he did not correct his error, though Tüchert had substantiated Langbaine in the meantime.<sup>106</sup> Dryden's use of this source is therefore discussed in Appendix B. Langbaine's suggestions about sources for the comic plot, however, are of small importance — of much less than were those for *The Maiden Queen*. Certain single lines in *Marriage à la Mode* probably prove that Dryden had read the works mentioned, but that is all; and the comic part of the drama would be very little different if he had not.

<sup>105</sup> *Works*, IV, 251.

<sup>106</sup> *Op cit.* Tüchert makes an inadequate examination of this source, and, while he points out that Langbaine's reference was wrong, does no better himself, for he gives IV, 2, instead of VI, 2.

In his critical preface to the Mermaid Edition (I, 228) Saintsbury admits that "Dryden has after his usual fashion (and the usual fashion of almost every playwright) borrowed scenes and touches from this and from that. . . But [he continues] the whole is very much his own." Nicoll has apparently followed Saintsbury in this mistake. He says of *Marriage à la Mode* (*op cit.*, p. 217). ". . . the serious portions are reminiscences certainly of the Sicilian portions in . . . [*The Maiden Queen*], but have a decided beauty of their own." This indicates that Nicoll had not examined the sources for either play.

In his late edition of the dramatic works Summers does observe (*op. cit.*, III, 179) that it has been remarked that the serious part of *Marriage à la Mode* "is founded on the story of Sesostris and Timarete in the *Grand Cyrus*" (Summers' quotation marks — to indicate that this was taken from Langbaine). But instead of telling his readers whether or not Langbaine was correct and, if so, to what extent Dryden used this source, Summers contents himself with giving a long résumé of the story of "Sesostris and Timarete."

The history of Timantes and Parthenia,<sup>107</sup> for instance, contains only one speech that Dryden took over. In the romance the Prince of Salamis is discussing his wife, Parthenie, with Megaside. Megaside is amazed that the Prince's love for such a beautiful woman has died since their marriage, and asks:

. . . pourquoi n'aimez vous plus Parthenie, puis qu'elle est aussi belle qu'elle estoit, quand vous en estiez amoureux?

And the Prince replies:

C'est parce . . . qu'il est de la beauté qu'on possède, comme des Parfums, où l'on s'accoutume si facilement, qu'on ne les sent plus du tout.<sup>108</sup>

In like manner Dryden represents Palamede as questioning Rhodophil about the reasons for the latter's lack of uxoriousness. Palamede suggests that it may be that his wife lacks beauty:

*Palamede:* You're very unfortunate indeed: then the case is plain, she is not handsome.

*Rhodophil:* A great beauty too, as people say.

*Palamede:* As people say? why, you should know that best yourself.

*Rhodophil:* Ask those, who have smelt to a strong perfume two years together, what's the scent.<sup>109</sup>

There are other likenesses between this part of the romance and the play. The Prince of Salamis discusses at some length the boredom which results from marriage. But the commonness of his attitude in the England of Pepys and Gramont makes this fact of little or no significance. When absolute proof of borrowing is lacking, one should not represent Dry-

<sup>107</sup> Mlle de Scudéry, *op. cit.*, Tome VI, Livre 1. Langbaine was right this time in making the reference at least.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

<sup>109</sup> *Marriage à la Mode*, I, 1.

den as going to a foreign source for what he could find about him.<sup>110</sup>

Langbaine's statement that the characters of Palamede and Rhodophil are from the history of Timantes and Parthenia is seen, then, to be immensely exaggerated. Only about two of the three hundred pages of that story have any resemblance to *Marriage à la Mode*, and only one sentence is demonstrably

<sup>110</sup> Nevertheless, the opinions of the Prince of Salamis are strikingly different from what one expects to find in a character in a French romance, and as a further proof that such characters often spoke and acted in the spirit of Restoration gallants, a quotation from *Le Grand Cyrus* is given here. The Prince of Salamis' state is described as follows (Mlle de Scudéry, *op cit*, pp 171-173) ' Il est pourtant vray que n'ayant aimé Parthenie que comme Belle, des que ses yeux furent accoustumés à la voir, & à la voir à lui, sa passion s'allentit de la tiédeur, son ame passa insensiblement à l'indifference, & de l'indifference au mespris car comme il auoit l'esprit bizarre, l'humeur de Parthenie & la sienne n'auoient aucun rapport le Prince de Salamis . commenca de dire tout haut, qu'il ne pouuoit pas conueoir comment on trouuoit estrange qu'il ne fust plus amoureux de sa Femme puis que selon son sens, son procédé ne satisfaisoit pas moins la bien seance que la raison Car enfin (me disoit il un iour, comme ie le suplois de me dire ce que ie deuois respondre à ceux qui me demandoient pourquoy il n'aimoit plus Parthenie qui estoit encore alors la plus belle chose du monde) ie ne trouue rien de plus extrauagant, que de voir un Mary faire encore l'amoureux de sa Femme & si Parthenie vouloit que ie le fusse tousiours d'elle, il falloit qu'elle ne m'espousast point "

Two pages farther on (175-176) he adds " Je l'espousois . parce que l'amour m'auoit fait perdre la raison & que iamais encore mieux m'exposer à n'estre plus son Amant, que de me resoudre à ne la posseder iamais Enfin, disoit il encore, il y a ie ne sçay quoy dans le Mariage, qui est si incompatible avec l'amour, que ie ne puis souffrir qu'on me blâme, de n'en auoir plus pour Parthenie En effet, poursuuiuit ce Prince, qui oste la grace de la nouueauté à l'amour, luy oste tout & qui en bannit le desir & l'esperance, ne luy laisse rien d'ardent ny d'agreable Iugez apres cela, quelle doit estre la passion d'un homme, qui voit tous les iours la mesme Personne, qui ne desire rien qui n'espere rien & qui ne voit dans l'aduenir, autre chose sinon que sa Femme sera un iour vieille & laide "

It should be noted, however, that the friends of the Prince of Salamis do not sympathize with this philosophy of married life Rhodophil, on the other hand, was influenced to become inconstant by his friends He says that he stopped loving his wife because "the world began to laugh at me, and a certain shame, of being out of fashion, seized me" (I, 1)

For another example of how much parts of *Le Grand Cyrus* are in the spirit of Restoration comedy see Appendix C.

borrowed. Langbaine, therefore, has given equal prominence to one source from which the whole serious part of the play was taken, and to another from which came one sentence of the comic plot. It is this habit that makes him untrustworthy.

The story of Nogaret in *The Annals of Love*,<sup>111</sup> which Langbaine gives as the third of Dryden's sources, has nothing in it that was certainly used in *Marriage à la Mode*.<sup>112</sup> Like the part cited from *Le Grand Cyrus*, it is a tale of a husband (Nogaret) who falls out of love with his wife (Mariana) merely because he is married to her. It is very much in the spirit of the play Mariana disguises herself and thus causes her husband to pay court to her under the misapprehension that she is someone else, and his vexation when he finds, after traveling for miles, being stuck in the mire, and nearly dying of fatigue to keep an assignation, that the woman he is in bed with is merely his wife, is very well described. It is the kind of thing Dryden might have used; but he did not.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>111</sup> Anonymous, London, 1672

<sup>112</sup> The part quoted from *Le Grand Cyrus* in the note just above and the story of Nogaret are nearer to each other than either one is to Dryden's play. It seems very likely, in fact, that pages 165-168 of the story of Nogaret was suggested by the part of *Le Grand Cyrus* quoted. The *Contes* of Antoine Le Metel, sieur D'Ouville, is hard to secure in America. After a long search for the book, I gave up verifying Langbaine's suggestion that Dryden had used D'Ouville in writing the speech Melantha makes just before her exit in III, 1. Then Summers' work appeared with the quotation from D'Ouville (*op. cit.*, III, 189)

<sup>113</sup> Professor L. I. Bredvold has called my attention to the fact that the song in IV, 3, of *Marriage à la Mode* beginning "When Alexis lay prest" is imitated from a French madrigal which appeared in 1664 in *Recueil de quelques pieces nouvelles et galantes, tant en prose qu'en vers* (pp. 188-189). The madrigal follows

"Tirsiis d'un excez de plaisir,  
Estoit sur le point de mourir  
Entre les bras de Filis qu'il adore,  
Quand Filis, que l'Amour range sous même loy,  
Et que le même feu devore,  
Luy dit, ahl mon Tirsiis, ahl ne meurs pas encore,



Dryden's material debts to his sources in the comic plot of *Marriage à la Mode* were, then, less important than in the case of his other courtly dramas; although they should have been taken into account by critics of his comedies more than they have been, it is certainly true that they are less extensive than was usual with Dryden; and until, as is always possible, new sources are turned up, a large part of *Marriage à la Mode* will have to be credited to its author's creative powers rather than to his adapting and combining ability.

If we assume, then, that most of the comic plot of *Marriage à la Mode* was original, it is interesting to consider the forces and the influences which caused Dryden to make it what it is. Even though further literary sources for the comic part of the play be found, the value of such an examination will not be much lessened; for in that case it will help to explain his selection of sources.

The growth of the comedy-of-manners tradition has already been mentioned. Obviously the success of such plays as *The Mulberry-Garden*, *She Wou'd If She Cou'd*, and *Love in a Wood* cannot but have influenced Dryden's choice of subject

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Je veux mourir avec toy.  
Tirsiis alors suspend l'enuie,  
Qu'il avoit de perdre la vie,  
Mais par cette contrainte il se met aux abois,  
Et n'osant pas mourir il se meurt mille fois;  
Cependant lors qu'au sein de cette jeune Amante,  
Le Berger à longs traits boit l'Amoureux poison;  
Elle qui sent déjà qu'il entre en pâmoison,  
D'un regard languissant, & d'une voix tremblante,  
Luy dit, mon unique soucy,  
Meurs, mon Tirsiis; car ie me meurs aussi.  
Soudain ce Berger tout en flâme,  
Luy répond, comme toy ie me meurs, je me pâme.  
Ainsi dans les ravissemens  
Moururent ces heureux Amans;  
Mais d'une mort si douce & si digne d'envie,  
Que pour mourir encor ils reprirent la vie."

and treatment. The vogue of the first two of these plays and of Dryden's own recent comedies had given him confidence in the genius of his own age and had led to his writing the well-known epilogue to *The Conquest of Granada* and to his adding to it the *Defence of the Epilogue* when the play was published in 1672. In this epilogue and essay Dryden had expressed and sustained the thesis that contemporary writers of comedy, himself included, no longer had to imitate Fletcher and Jonson, but could outdo them by imitating the witty language, "the gallantry and civility" of contemporary ladies and gentlemen. Not only had he shown that he no longer thought it necessary to remember that Fletcher and Ben were his "elder brothers"; he had turned against the whole system of humours.<sup>114</sup> This attitude may be partly explained by natural irritation at the attack of Shadwell, the defender of humours, on Dryden's "whoring ruffian and impudent tom-rig" — names which that dramatist had applied to Celadon and Florimel in the preface to *The Sullen Lovers* — but it is more likely to be due to the fact that the witty and modern *Maiden Queen* had had an immense success in the same year that the rewritten *Wild Gallant* with its Jonsonian humours had failed.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>114</sup> In the prologue to the first version of *The Wild Gallant* Dryden had said.

"And, for wit, those, that boast their own estate,  
Forget Fletcher and Ben before them went,  
Their elder brothers. . . ."

In the epilogue to *The Conquest of Granada* we find

"Wit's now arrived to a more high degree;  
Our native language more refined and free  
Our ladies and our men now speak more wit  
In conversation, than those poets writ."

Wit here means not only repartee, but "a propriety of thoughts and words" of serious plays as well. But in the *Defence of the Epilogue* Dryden shows that he is here thinking of comedies at least as much as of serious dramas.

<sup>115</sup> *The Wild Gallant*, apparently, was more successful in 1667 than it had

This epilogue and its defense have usually been treated as evidence of a bad case of overconfidence in Dryden, and critics have been disposed to breathe more easily and beam approval when he later tempered the pronouncements he had made in them. It is not surprising that his literary enemies took this attitude, but modern critics should realize that his best comedies were written when he was apparently applying most completely to his own work the theory expressed in the epilogue.

There is no doubt that Dryden at least felt that *Marriage à la Mode* owed its success to the fact that he had imitated contemporary wit and repartee. Aside from the evidence of the *Defence of the Epilogue*, which was written about the same time as the play, we have Dryden's dedication of the play to John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, in which he says:

. . . not only I . . . but the best comic writers of our age, will join with me to acknowledge, that they have copied the gallantries of courts, the delicacy of expression, and the decencies of behaviour, from your Lordship, with more success, than if they had taken their models from the court of France.<sup>116</sup>

It should be noted in this connection that the morals of the heroes of *Marriage à la Mode* were calculated to please Rochester just as those of Loveby of *The Wild Gallant* had been sympathetic to the Countess of Castlemaine and her royal master.<sup>117</sup> The characters of *The Maiden Queen* had been perhaps slightly less wicked; Celadon, although he had defended whoremasters, had retained enough of the French char-

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been in 1662/3, but even of that production Dryden says "I made the town my judges, and the greater part condemned it" (Preface to *The Wild Gallant*, *Works*, II, 27).

<sup>116</sup> *Works*, IV, 253-254. It seems possible that Dryden is here referring to the fact that *The Maiden Queen* had been inspired indirectly (through Mlle de Scudéry) by the French court, while he has now taken Rochester and his fellow gentleman-rakes for his models.

<sup>117</sup> See pp. 43-47.

acters out of which he was constructed to be surprisingly chaste so far as his own actions were concerned. He was a changeable wooer but nothing worse. The necessity for connubial infidelity and promiscuity, however, is the rock on which *Marriage à la Mode* is built.<sup>118</sup> The song which begins it,

Why should a foolish marriage vow,  
Which long ago was made,  
Oblige us to each other now,  
When passion is decayed?

is, in fact, the theme song of the production. And it is made plain at once that the characters of the comic plot are to consider marriage a misfortune and chastity an unfashionable peculiarity.

Not much argument is necessary to show that this was Rochester's attitude. One of his own poems might well have been sung instead of the song quoted above.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>118</sup> It is true that no overt act is committed in *Marriage à la Mode*. But this results from chance, not from the desires of the characters. Dryden comments on his having arranged to have his characters stopped short of what they purposed in the epilogue

"But yet too far out poet would not run  
Though 'twas well offered, there was nothing done."

<sup>119</sup> *Collected Works of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester*, edited by John Heywood (The Nonesuch Press [London], 1926). Wilmot wrote several satires against marriage (see pp. 93-95, 133-134, 142). On page 134 he says

"Like Galley-Slaves you live whene're you Wed,  
Tugg at a wife and drag a Chain in Bed"

The friendship of Rochester and Dryden did not last long. Rochester attacked him for his *Epilogue to the Conquest of Granada* and the *Defence*, with the lines (quoted by Scott, *Works*, IV, 244)

"And may I not have leave impartially  
To search and censure Dryden's works, and try  
If those gross faults, his choice pen doth commit,  
Proceed from want of judgment, or of wit?  
Or if his lumpish fancy doth refuse  
Spirit and grace to his loose slattern muse?  
Five hundred verses, every morning writ,  
Prove him no more a poet than a wit."

Rochester was not the only courtier among the friends of Dryden. At this time, when he was writing those comedies which come nearest to reflecting contemporary smart life, Dryden was intimate with Sir Robert Howard, Dorset, and Sedley, whose conversation is supposed to be represented in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, and with Etherege. His letters to Etherege have considerable of the "gallant" in them,<sup>120</sup> and the dedication of *The Assignment* to Sedley (1673) indicates that his friendship with the courtiers was not exclusively literary.<sup>121</sup>

The expression by Melantha, Doralice, and Artemis of their contempt for the country sounds particularly as if it were drawn from life. It is true, of course, that such an attitude was not new in English drama. It had appeared in Fletcher's *Wit without Money*,<sup>122</sup> in his unfinished *Noble Gentleman*,<sup>123</sup> and

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Later, in 1679, Rochester attacked him again by hiring men to beat him in the Rose Alley ambushade. Dryden fought only with words. In the preface to *All for Love* he called Rochester a "rhyming judge of the twelpenny gallery," and it is just possible that he satirized him in *Mr Limberham*. See Appendix D for a discussion of the possibility that Woodall of Dryden's *Mr. Limberham* was modeled on Rochester.

<sup>120</sup> The well-known letter from Dryden to Etherege (*The Letterbook of Sir George Etherege*, ed. Sybil Rosenfeld [Oxford, 1928], p. 357) was written somewhat later — February 16, 1687. In it Dryden says, "Oh, that our monarch would encourage noble idleness by his own example as he of blessed memory did before him. . . . Ask me not of love, for every man hates every man perfectly and women are still the same bitches. . . ."

This was written long after Dryden had ceased to portray witty gentlemen in his comedies, but it obviously harks back to happier days.

<sup>121</sup> In the dedication of *The Assignment* to Sedley Dryden wrote (*Works*, IV, 372-373) "We have, like them, our genial nights, where our discourse is neither too serious nor too light, but always pleasant, the raillery neither too sharp upon the present, nor too censorious on the absent, and the cups only such as will raise the conversation of the night, without disturbing the business of the morrow." In a note Scott compares "this beautiful account of elegant dissipation" with the drunken brawl that Spence reports in which Sedley, young Dorset, and Sir Thomas Ogle took part. One can imagine, however, that Dryden had a restraining hand on his friends, or that they invited him to join them only when they felt more like literateurs than like exhibitionists.

<sup>122</sup> II, 5.

<sup>123</sup> IV, 4.

in many of the plays by the sons of Ben. Shirley emphasizes the urbanity of many of his characters by having them give amusing accounts of how much they suffered when obliged to live away from London, and *The Lady of Pleasure* opens with a description of the boredom of a rural existence. The Marquis of *Ibrahim*, from whom Dryden took hints for *The Maiden Queen*, expresses the same feeling, as has already been observed.<sup>124</sup> But the completeness of the illustrations by Doralice of the difference between the country and the city and the Court makes it seem, at least, like the result of fresh observation; among other things she says:

A friend of mine, who makes songs sometimes, came lately out of the west, and vowed he was so put out of countenance with a song of his, for, at the first country gentleman's he visited, he saw three tailors cross-legged upon the table in the hall, who were tearing out as loud as ever they could sing,

— After the pangs of a desperate lover,

And that all day he heard of nothing else, but the daughters of the house, and the maids, humming it over in every corner, and the father whistling it.<sup>125</sup>

The friend, of course, was Dryden, and the song was from *The Mock Astrologer*, then nearly four years old.<sup>126</sup>

The originality of the character of Melantha has not as yet been successfully questioned. The claim that she is imitated from Mascarille of *Les Précieuses ridicules* cannot be sustained. Both characters affect the use of words which they consider exceptionally refined, but Mascarille borrows his phrases from the most exaggerated *précieuse* jargon, while Melantha merely uses French words where an English word

<sup>124</sup> See p 91.

<sup>125</sup> *Marriage à la Mode*, III, 1.

<sup>126</sup> This device later became very common in the comedy of manners. See, for instance, *Sir Fopling Flutter*, III, 1, and *The Way of the World*, IV, 4.

with the same meaning would do as well. Besides, in spite of the artificiality of her behavior, Melantha is not intended by Dryden to be altogether ridiculous, as was Mascarille. She is not entirely a would-be. It is true, of course, that her affectations are held up to satire, and when she mournfully tells how the Princess Amalthea, after conversing with her, chose for company two ladies who had come in later than she,<sup>127</sup> Melantha is the object of derision; and the same thing is true when later in the same scene Doralice makes fun of her use of French words. But her spirits, energy, and a certain grace, even when she is most pretentious, keep her from being merely a fool. She knows she is affected, but, like Millamant, who was to follow and imitate her, she does not care.<sup>128</sup> Rhodophil speaks convincingly when he says:

The devil's in me, that I must love this woman.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>127</sup> *Marriage à la Mode*, III, 1. It should be noted, too, that Melantha's phrase, which she employs to a ridiculous extent, "Let me die," is used in other Restoration comedies by would be's as "Let me perish." This tag distinguishes Dapperwit from the true wits of *Love in a Wood* and its use is exaggerated to the same degree by Brisk of *The Double Dealer*.

<sup>128</sup> Saintsbury observed in his preface to *Marriage à la Mode* in *The Mermaid Series* (p. 228) ". . . there is no doubt, that Melantha herself gave more than a hint to Congreve for one of his greatest triumphs, Millamant." Millamant is much more subtle than is Melantha, and the contradictions in her character seem better unified. But she too affects French phrases (*The Way of the World*, Act IV), though it is not an *idée fixe* with her as it is with Melantha, she hates not only the country, but the town (*ibid.*), and finally her proviso speech with Mirabel (*ibid.*) seems to have taken hints from the proviso of Melantha and Palamede (*Marriage à la Mode*, II, 1). Melantha says in the latter scene "Then, we will never make visits together, nor see a play, but always apart, you shall be every day at the king's levee, and I at the queen's, and we will never meet, but in the drawing room." Millamant says "Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together, but let us be very strange and well bred let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while, and as well bred as if we were not married at all."

An example of a less successful (because more slavish) imitation of Melantha is Lady Fantast in Shadwell's *Bury Fair*. She says (II, 1) ". . . Heroic Numbers upon Love and Honour, are most Ravissant, most Suprenant; and a Tragedy is so Touchant! I dye at a Tragedy, I'll swear I do."

<sup>129</sup> *Marriage à la Mode*, II, 1.

There are a few sources for bits of *Marriage à la Mode* still to be mentioned. The name Palamede may have been taken by Dryden from a character in *L'Ariane*, a romance by Monsieur Jean Des Marets de Saint Sorlin.<sup>180</sup> Des Marets' Palamede criticizes the attitude of the serious characters toward love in much the same way that Hylas does in *L'Astrée*, and defends frequent change rather than constancy. Especially noteworthy is the French Palamede's song which begins:<sup>181</sup>

Amour est un enfant volage  
Qui change de lieu tous les jours. . . .

It continues later:

Amour n'a point d'autres délices,  
Qu'à faire quelque coup nouveau:  
Puis il se rit sous son bandeau,  
De tous les maux que causent ces malices:  
Cherchant à rire en plus d'un lieu. . . .

Dryden seems not to have taken anything but the name from this character, but the character's likeness to the one he had created probably suggested that he use it.

Finally, it should be noted that Dryden has, as usual, imitated bits from his own earlier plays.<sup>182</sup> The refusal of Melantha and Doralice to lodge together because they are both disguised as boys<sup>183</sup> is strongly reminiscent of *The Rival-Ladies*,<sup>184</sup> in which Hippolito and Angelina find themselves in the same predicament; and Rhodophil's insistence that he

<sup>180</sup> *L'Ariane* was first published in Paris in 1632. The edition I used appeared in Paris in 1643.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238

<sup>182</sup> Martin Clifford accused Dryden of stealing from himself, declaring "You are . . . a strange unconscionable Thief, that art not content to steal from others, but do'st rob thy poor wretched Self too" (*Notes upon Mr. Dryden's Poems in Four Letters*, p. 7 [London, 1687]). Clifford had Dryden's heroic plays chiefly in mind.

<sup>183</sup> *Marriage à la Mode*, IV, 4.

<sup>184</sup> I, 3.



would love Doralice better if her good qualities could be put into three or four women<sup>135</sup> is a repetition of the philosophy which Celadon of *The Maiden Queen* had borrowed from the Marquis of *Ibrahim*.

## VI

*The Spanish Friar*, Dryden's next tragicomedy, was probably first produced in 1678.<sup>136</sup> This was at the end of his best period for tragedy. *Aureng-Zebe* had shown that he had left his worst heroic bombast behind him, and *All for Love* had had a new tragic intensity. In comedy, on the other hand, Dryden had deserted the witty characters of *The Maiden Queen*, *The Mock Astrologer*, and *Marriage à la Mode*, and turned to low farcical intrigue. This change, possibly caused by the fact that both Etherege and Wycherley had now brought the comedy of manners to a polish that Dryden could not hope to emulate,<sup>137</sup> more directly dictated by the failure of *The Assignation*, which revealed that Dryden could not successfully continue his pair of witty lovers forever, was certainly in part an attempt by Dryden to please a changing, apparently more bourgeois, audience.<sup>138</sup> Ravenscroft, Mrs. Behn, and

<sup>135</sup> *Marriage à la Mode*, I, 1.

<sup>136</sup> Nicoll, *op. cit.*, p. 311. He has there printed a record which shows that *The Spanish Friar* was given before the king on March 8, 1678/9. It probably appeared first in 1678.

<sup>137</sup> Even Shadwell had outdone him by this time — in *Epsom-Wells* (1672) and *The Virtuoso* (1676).

<sup>138</sup> It seems likely, from the kind of plays given there, that the citizens went to the Duke's theater. It is significant that Dryden's best high comedy — *The Maiden Queen*, *The Mock Astrologer*, and *Marriage à la Mode* — was produced for the King's theater, and that after he began writing for the Duke's theater Dryden produced low comedy in *Mr. Limberham* and *The Spanish Friar*. That the citizens frequented the latter house had been mentioned by Dryden in the prologue to *Marriage à la Mode*. Scott says that *Mr. Limberham* was given at the Duke's theater for this reason. Scott's words are (*Works*, VI, 3) : "... Being a satire upon a court vice, it was deemed peculiarly calculated for that play-house." It is significant, too, that the farcical *Sir Martin Mar-all*

particularly D'Urfey had shown that this audience could be pleased with intrigue and farce, and, though *Mr. Limberham*, written on the plan of D'Urfey's successes,<sup>139</sup> had failed, Dryden persisted in producing that kind of comedy, ending with *Love Triumphant*, the comic portion of which is nothing but farce.

Since most critics, following Scott, have ranked *The Spanish Friar* ahead of most of Dryden's other plays in excellence,<sup>140</sup> their failure to examine its sources is particularly striking. Until lately no one had suggested a source for the serious plot. As for the comic plot, all modern critics have agreed that the Friar is made up of Shakespeare's Falstaff and Lopez of Fletcher's *Spanish Curate*.<sup>141</sup> No one has thought, apparently, to compare the comic plot with the source which Langbaine gives, *Le Pelerin*,<sup>142</sup> a contemporary novel by Ga-

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was given at the Duke's playhouse, even though Dryden was at the time under contract with Killigrew. This has always been explained by the fact that the Duke of Newcastle, who is supposed to have preferred the Duke of York's theater, collaborated with Dryden in writing the play. The explanation that *Sir Martin Mar-all*, being farcical, was more fitted for the city than for the court is, however, better. Pepys, it will be remembered, liked it especially.

After the union of the two companies Dryden continued in his last two plays to write the kind of comedy he had been producing for the Duke's company.

<sup>139</sup> See Chapter IV.

<sup>140</sup> Scott says (*Works*, VI, 395) that *The Spanish Friar* is "one of the best and most popular of our poet's dramatic efforts." Saintsbury (*ibid.*, p. 401) insists that the play's popularity is "incomprehensible" to him, but he later chooses *The Spanish Friar* for his Mermaid volumes. The play was extremely popular when first written. Downes says (*op. cit.*, p. 37) "*The Spanish Friar*, Wrote by Mr Dryden; 'twas Admirably Acted, and produc'd vast Profit to the Company."

<sup>141</sup> Scott mentioned only Falstaff (*Works*, VI, 396), but Saintsbury claimed (*ibid.*, p. 401) that Dominic is "little more than a blended reminiscence of Falstaff and Fletcher's Lopez," and nearly every later critic who has mentioned the play has harked back to this statement.

<sup>142</sup> Langbaine's statement (*op. cit.*, p. 172) is as follows: "The Comical Parts of the *Spanish Friar*, Lorenzo and Elvira, are founded on Monsieur S. Bremond's Novel call'd the *Pilgrim*."

The British Museum catalogue gives the date of *Le Pelerin* as "1675?";

briel de Bremond.<sup>143</sup> My examination of this book, which is to follow, shows that any borrowings which Dryden may have made from Shakespeare or Fletcher are comparatively insignificant. The Friar is not much more like Falstaff than is any witty, fat, debauched old man; and it is especially to be noted that his hypocrisy had no source in Falstaff, who repeated puritan phrases to be amusing and intended to deceive nobody by them. Nor is *The Spanish Friar* much like *The Spanish Curate*; the similarity is so vague as to make the supposed connection between the two plays no more than a remote possibility. The only way in which they are alike is that in both plays a churchman introduces a young man into the house of one whom he (the young man) hopes to cuckold. Fletcher's priest, Lopez, suggests little of Dominic and his cleverness in reconciling his pimping with his religion. In fact, he makes almost none of the pretense to piety which we find in Dryden's (and Bremond's) friar. He is not an adept at hypocrisy, of which both the others are virtuosos. It is especially important to note that Fletcher's curate does not even know at first that his young friend is planning to seduce Bartolus' wife. Finally, there are no verbal borrowings from *The Spanish Curate* in Dryden's play.<sup>144</sup>

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Barbier's *Dictionnaire des anonymes*, as "vers 1670." In the Library of Congress copy which I used no date is given. The title-page of the latter copy is as follows: "Le/Pelerin/Nouvelle/Par le Sieur/S. Bre./chez/George L'Indulgent/à St Jaques de Galice/." The rarity of the book is indicated by the fact that the Bibliothèque Nationale is without a copy.

Langbaine's reference is probably to P. Belon's translation of *Le Pelerin* It appeared in 1680. I have used the original.

<sup>143</sup> After this had been written Montague Summers included a reference to the novel and an outline of its plot in his discussion of the source of *The Spanish Friar* (*op cit.*, V, 109), but his conclusion is that, while Dryden had read *Le Pelerin*, he has used only "one or two touches" of it in his dialogue and that these touches are "the merest trifles." As is to be shown, this is gross understatement.

<sup>144</sup> Insistence on this point would be unnecessary had not the tendency to reiterate Saintsbury's exaggeration of the importance of this source been

Before the introduction of proof of the real origin of Dryden's comic plot, the source of the serious part of the play should, in accordance with the order I have been following, be discussed.

The most important of Dryden's sources for this serious plot was certainly *L'Astrate* of Philippe Quinault, which had been acted and published in Paris in 1665. Pierre Legouis, who made this discovery, points out that the plot of Quinault's and Dryden's play was so common in the tragedies of the time as to make it necessary to show striking likenesses between the two plays in order to *prove* influence. By the use of parallel passages Legouis has done so.<sup>145</sup>

Apropos of the commonness of the plot of Dryden's and Quinault's play, a quotation from M. Gustave Reynier is enlightening:

Il n'y a pas eu, au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, trente ou même dix tragédies romanesques, mais, à dire le vrai, il n'y en a eu qu'une. Et voici à quoi elle se ramène: Le fond de l'intrigue c'est . . . une substitution d'enfant suivie d'une reconnaissance. Le héros est ordinairement un jeune capitaine qui s'est déjà illustré par maint exploit: il aime sans espoir la fille de son roi et se prépare à s'éloigner pour toujours, quand un billet retrouvé par miracle —

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universal Even J. H. Wilson, *The Influence of Beaumont and Fletcher on Restoration Drama* (p. 64), claims that Dryden "took . . . [his] characters from Fletcher and carried them still further in the directions indicated in the older play." Wilson has made a kind of attempt to be thorough, for he has examined (*ibid.*, p. 63) *Gerardo, the Unfortunate Spaniard*, a Spanish novel by Gonzalo de Céspedes on which *The Spanish Curate* was based, to assure himself that Dryden was more likely to have used the play than its source. What Wilson failed to do was to take account of the possibility that Langbaine might be correct rather than Saintsbury.

<sup>145</sup> This was a surprisingly late discovery. P. Legouis discusses it in "Quinault et Dryden. Une Source de *The Spanish Fryar*," *Revue de littérature comparée*, XI (1931), 398-415.

Since we are here interested chiefly in the comic parts of the tragicomedies, the extent of the likeness between the two plays will not be discussed at this time.

fait reconnaître en lui l'héritier légitime du trône et lui permet ainsi d'épouser sa maîtresse. . . . Quant au cinquième (acte), il est régulièrement occupé par l'inévitable sédition qui doit précipiter le dénouement: . . . à la tête de quelques soldats fidèles, le jeune prince longtemps méconnu accourt pour faire tête à l'orage. . . .<sup>146</sup>

This passage, quoted by Legouis,<sup>147</sup> indicates how common the plot is, and it may be that in the future, sources for bits of the serious part of *The Spanish Friar* will be found in others of the French tragedies which follow this plan. In fact, one of them, Corneille's *Don Sanche d'Aragon* must have been read by Dryden, since he borrows some of the names of his characters from it.<sup>148</sup>

To return to the comic plot, it is interesting to observe that the name of the comic heroine, Elvira,<sup>149</sup> also may have been taken by Dryden from *Don Sanche d'Aragon*. Moreover, the relationship of Elvira and Lorenzo, that of brother and sister, and the incest which nearly results from their being ignorant of this relationship,<sup>150</sup> was possibly suggested by the love, in Corneille noble and serious, which had been shown to be growing up between Elvira and her brother, Don Sanche.<sup>151</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Gustave Reynier, *Thomas Corneille* (Paris, 1892), pp. 134-135.

<sup>147</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 402-403.

<sup>148</sup> Leonora, Dryden's queen, is named after Corneille's queen. Alphonso, one of the general officers in *The Spanish Friar*, is named after the queen's dead father, whom Corneille's hero had fought for. Raymond, Torrismond's supposed father in Dryden, is named after the character who had practically the same function in Corneille. Other features of *The Spanish Friar* are closer to *Don Sanche* than they are to *L'Astrate*. *The Spanish Friar* is like the former play, for instance, in being laid in Spain. The scene of *L'Astrate* was laid in Tyre before the time of Christ.

<sup>149</sup> In Corneille the name has the French form, "Elvire." Dryden has made it Spanish.

<sup>150</sup> As is noted below in the discussion of *Don Sebastian*, Dryden touched on this theme in many of his late plays.

<sup>151</sup> It is perhaps equally possible that the name Elvira was suggested to Dryden by its use in a story of incest in *The Annals of Love* (pp. 53-72), a collection which he had already made use of as a source for a part of *The*

The intrigue between Lorenzo and Elvira, however, is from Bremond's *Pelerin*. The play differs from the novel at first. This was unavoidable, since Dryden's characters had to be fitted into the background of the serious plot that he had taken from Quinault and Corneille.

*Le Pelerin*<sup>152</sup> is the story of Camille, an aristocratic young Italian, who, exiled from his own country, takes the disguise of a pilgrim and goes to Spain. Being a gallant, he quite naturally looks about the boat on which he is traveling for a beautiful woman to make love to and is fortunate enough to find a marchioness who is made for love. This lady has an insanely jealous husband, the kind of man who is made to be cuckolded. Camille finds a tiny knot hole in the partition which separates his cabin from that of the marchioness. This serves the young man not only as a peephole, but, after the voluptuous *déshabillé* of the lady has quite captured his heart, as a means of getting a written declaration of love to her. She lets him know that there is hope.

Up to this point there has been nothing in Bremond's novel that Dryden used; the first meeting of Lorenzo and Elvira<sup>153</sup> has been worked out quite differently and, apparently, originally.

After Camille and his new mistress land in Barcelona, events occur which serve as a source for Dryden. Camille, realizing that only a friar can gain admittance to the lady, secures the assistance of the rascally, greedy, hypocritical Père André, who willingly helps him. When Père André and his method of helping Camille are compared with the character

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*Assignment.* See p. 177. Other characters in the same story were named Alphonso and Raymond.

<sup>152</sup> This tale seems to have been popular in England. It was translated by P. Belon, Gent., in 1680, and a second edition of this version, with an addition by the translator, appeared in 1700.

<sup>153</sup> *The Spanish Friar*, I, 2.

and his methods in Dryden's play, no doubt remains that Bremond's novel is the real source. Parallel passages from the two works will make this clear. The passages quoted are from *The Spanish Friar*, Act II, Scene 2, in which the friar is first introduced, and from *Le Pelerin*, pages 46-51. As usual, Dryden followed his source rather closely at first, though there is comparatively little word-for-word translation; but his originality becomes greater as the plot progresses:

*The Spanish Friar*

*Lorenzo:*

This may hit; 'tis more than barely possible; for Friars have free admittance into every house. This jacobin, whom I have sent to, is her confessor, and who can suspect a man of such reverence for a pimp? I'll try for once; I'll bribe him high, for commonly none love money better than they who have made a vow of poverty.

*Servant:*

There's a huge, fat, religious gentleman coming up, sir. He says he's but a friar, but he's big enough to be a pope; his gills are as rosy as a turkey cock; his great belly walks in state before him, like an harbinger; and his gouty legs come limping after: Never was such a tun of devotion seen.

*Le Pelerin*

. . . Il savoit, qu'en Espagne les Moines sont les confidens ordinaires de toutes les intrigues galantes; a cause de l'entrée qu'ils ont dans toutes les maisons, . . . Il crut, que s'il pouvoit faire connoissance avec celui, qui servoit dans la chapelle du Gouverneur, il auroit une bonne issue de son dessein; . . . Il avoit appris en Italie que les Moines, qui resistoit au Diable, ne resistoient pas à l'argent. . . .

[There is not much precedent for this in the novel; in fact, Bremond's friar is later represented as being a good runner and, except that he has "un visage frais & vermeil comme un bon Jacobin qu'il estoit" he does not resemble Dryden's character physically. Bremond does say, however: "En Espagne ils [the jacobins] ne representent pas la misere du

[Dominic enters, and, after a few remarks to him about his size, Lorenzo continues.]

*Lorenzo:*

. . . Come to our better acquaintance — here's a sovereign remedy for old age and sorrow.

(*Drinks*)

*Dominic:*

The looks of it are indeed *al-uring*: I'll do you reason.

(*Drinks*)

*Lorenzo:*

Is it to your palate, father?

*Dominic:*

Second thoughts, they say, are best. I'll consider it once again. (*Drinks*) It has a most delicious flavour with it. Gad forgive me, I have forgotten to drink your health, son; I am not used to be so unmannerly.

(*Drinks again*)

*Lorenzo:*

No, I'll be sworn, by what I see of you, you are not: — To the bottom; — I warrant him a true churchman. — Now, father, to our business: 'tis agreeable to your calling; I do intend to do an act of charity. . . . Being in the late battle, in great hazard of my life, I recommended my person to good Saint Dominic. . . . To make

pays: beaucoup de chapelets & peu de penitence. On se met à table, on mange, & l'on boit un peu mieux qu'au refectoire.]

. . . Mr. le Pelerin joue son personnage, & le Reverend Pere encore mieux le sien. Les amities volent de part & d'autre: ce sont des santez & des complimens, des protestations de service & des tendresses les plus belles du monde. Ayez bû une fois avec ces Reverends Peres, c'est une connoissance establee pour jusqu'à l'autre monde; . . .

. . . il prend le bon Pere en particulier & lui dit que . . . par un voeu, qu'il avoit fait à St. Jacques, il savoit, qu'il estoit encore obligé de faire quelques charitez, pour faire prier Dieu



short my story; I inquired among the jacobins for an almoner, and the general fame has pointed out your reverence as the worthiest man: — here are fifty good pieces in this purse. . . .

pour lui, & qu'il ne croyoit pas, de les pouvoir mettre en des meilleures mains qu'entres les siennes. La dessus il tire de sa poche une bourse de Pistoles, dont il en donna cinquante au Reverend Pere, . . .

Lorenzo and Camille here both tell their friars about their mistresses. Lorenzo speaks of his "female saint." They continue:

*Lorenzo:*

I have some business of importance with her, which I have communicated in this paper; but her husband is so horribly given to be jealous —

. . . j'ay quelque affaire avec elle, & je ne puis pas lui parler à cause de son mari, qui en est jaloux.

*Dominic:*

Ho, jealous? he's the very quintessence of jealousy; he keeps no male creature in his house; and from abroad he lets no man come near her.

Hol jaloux, interrompit le Pere André, plus que tous les hommes du monde. . . .

*Lorenzo:*

Excepting you, father.

*Dominic:*

Me, I grant you; I am her director and her guide in spiritual affairs: but he has his humours with me too; for t'other day he called me false apostle.

*Lorenzo:*

Did he so? that reflects upon you all; on my word, father, that touches your copyhold. If you would do a meritorious ac-

tion, you might revenge the church's quarrel. — My letter, father —

*Dominic:*

Well, so far as a letter, I will take upon me; for what can I refuse to a man so charitably given?

*Lorenzo:*

If you bring an answer back, that purse in your hand has a twin-brother, as like him as ever he can look; there are fifty pieces lie dormant in it for more charities.

. . . je voudrois bien, continua Camille, lui faire rendre seulement une lettre, & je crois qu'il n'y a pas de mal à cela. Ah! point du tout, lui répondit le scrupuleux Pere, & vous n'avez qu'à me la donner: je vous promets, foy de bon Religieux, comme je suis, que vous en aurez reponse, avant que vous vous couchiez. Si cela est, lui repliqua Camille, il y a encore cinquante pistoles pour des charitez. Je vous dis, reprit le zélé Pere André, que vous l'aurez, car vous estes trop charitable, & trop homme de bien, pour que le ciel n'exauce pas vos voeux. . . .

It can be seen that Dryden got nearly all his ideas for the character of Dominic,<sup>154</sup> which is pretty fully outlined in this first scene in which he appears, from three pages of Bremond.<sup>155</sup> The other scenes of Dryden's comic plot take little more from *Le Pelerin*, though they enlarge on suggestions used here. It is obvious, too, that Dryden has added fairly successfully to what he has borrowed even in the scene quoted.<sup>156</sup>

There are other passages in *Le Pelerin* which influenced

<sup>154</sup> Even the name "Dominic" was probably suggested to Dryden by the fact that Bremond's Père André was of the order of St. Dominic, as Bremond says on page 116.

<sup>155</sup> There is an interesting possibility that Scott in turn was influenced by Dryden's Friar in drawing the character of the friar in his *Ivanhoe*.

<sup>156</sup> It should be noted that in Bremond there are *two ladies*: the marchioness, whom Camille loves, and the governor's wife, who insists on pursuing Camille, with both of whom Père André has dealings. Dryden used the events arising out of the situation between Camille and *both ladies* for the comic plot of *Don Sebastian*. See pp. 144-147.

Dryden in creating the character of the Friar. The first of these is the following:

Le Pere André, fort ravi-d'ayse de cette confidence, qui lui donnoit un si beau retour sur Doña Barbara, commenca aussi de son costé à lui faire une petite remonstrance, ainsi qu'il estoit de son devoir, & à lui représenter les consequences de ces engagemens, les repentirs dont ils estoient ordinairement suivis, & la honte du monde, quand ils venoient à esclatter. Tout cela néanmoins fort legerement, & toujourns avec des neanmois, qui radoucissoient la rigueur de la remonstrance, qui n'estoit pas des plus severes. Et voyant enfin, qu'il n'y avoit pas moyen de la persuader de ce costé-la, comme il n'en avoit pas envie non plus il se tourna en Directeur indulgent de l'autre, & lui dit d'un air devot & languissant, que *puisque les remedes spirituels ne pouvoient rien sur elle, il falloit se servir des naturels, & de deux maux eviter le pire, qui estoit le scandale.* . . .<sup>187</sup>

Dryden uses suggestions from this speech in many places. His imitation is particularly close in Act II, Scene 3:

*Dominic:* A [marriage] vow is a very solemn thing; and 'tis good to keep it: but, notwithstanding, it may be broken upon some occasions. Have you striven with all your might against this frailty?

Elvira assures him that she has, and, after Dominic has discoursed for a page upon the idea (Père André's idea that one might sin under certain circumstances) Elvira gives him a letter, saying that she will die unless he takes it to Lorenzo. Dominic continues:

*Dominic:* At your peril be it, then I have told you the ill consequences; *ET LIBERAVI ANIMAM MEAM.* *Your reputation is in danger, to say nothing of your soul. Notwithstanding, when the spiritual means have been applied, and fail, in that case the carnal may be used.*

<sup>187</sup> Pp 132-133. In this and in the following quotation from *The Spanish Friar* I have italicized the words which indicate most strongly that Dryden used Bremond's tale.

Indeed the whole of the third scene of Act II should be compared with the last quotation from *Le Pelerin*. It is nearly all suggested by the ten lines quoted. Although Dryden has in one way improved what he borrowed by putting it into dramatic form, he would have done better had he been willing to have the characters express the idea but once, instead of repeating and expanding it. As Miss Sherwood has said,<sup>158</sup> Dryden's greatest error was his feeling that if a little is good, a great deal is better. It was this that made him parallel Miranda in *The Tempest* with a man who had never seen a woman, and it led to the worst oratorical excesses of Montezuma and Almanzor. In comedy it caused such scenes as this, effective enough, but unnecessarily repetitious.

The parallels of parts of *Le Pelerin* with the comic portion of *The Spanish Friar* already given are enough to prove that Père André was a much more important progenitor of Dominic than is Falstaff or Fletcher's Lopez. But there are other proofs of the relationship. When Dominic threatens to excommunicate Gomez if he does not allow him to talk with Elvira,<sup>159</sup> we are reminded of Père André's having made the same threat to the soldiers who tried to capture him.<sup>160</sup> Again, when Lorenzo secures Dominic's secrecy by saying that what he tells him is revealed *in confession*,<sup>161</sup> we remember that Camille made the same suggestion.<sup>162</sup> Finally, there is no doubt that Dominic's *second* attempt to gain admittance to Elvira, which is foiled by Gomez,<sup>163</sup> is modeled on Père André's *first* attempt to see the marchioness.<sup>164</sup> Both Dominic and Bremond's friar claim that they want to give the lady spiritual advice. Both

<sup>158</sup> Margaret Sherwood, *Dryden's Dramatic Theory and Practice*, p. 11.

<sup>159</sup> *The Spanish Friar*, II, 3.

<sup>160</sup> *Le Pelerin*, p. 116.

<sup>161</sup> *The Spanish Friar*, IV, 1.

<sup>162</sup> *Le Pelerin*, p. 50.

<sup>163</sup> *The Spanish Friar*, IV, 1 (*Works*, VI, 474-476).

<sup>164</sup> *Le Pelerin*, pp. 78-80.

are told that the lady is ill. Both reply that, if the lady is ill, a man of God is especially necessary and suggest that Heaven has sent them (Dryden changes "Heaven" to "my good angel" for the sake of the pun). Both are then told by the husband that the lady has but lately been to confessional. Both finally protest that men of their Order are not to be treated in such a manner and are told that the Pope and the whole Church ("the Pope and all his cardinals" in Dryden) would be treated the same way.<sup>168</sup>

*The Spanish Friar*, more than any other play of Dryden's has been thought by critics to have a religious or a political significance. The author of *The Laureat*, a four-page leaflet in verse which appeared in 1687, accused Dryden of having written the play, and of having attacked Catholicism in it, because in 1680 his pension was not paid. In support of this accusation he pointed out that Dryden had returned to the service of the Court and of the Tory faction when the pension was paid again in the following year. But Professor L. I. Bredvold has shown <sup>169</sup> that, since the play was written in 1679 or possibly even earlier, the non-payment of the pension in

<sup>168</sup> There are two or three unimportant reminiscences of certain plays of Molière in *The Spanish Friar*. These are mentioned by Carl Hartmann in his *Einfluss Molière's auf Dryden's komisch-dramatische Dichtungen*, pp. 29-30. Hartmann exaggerates the importance of the "erinnerungen" of Molière, since he has not thought of examining *Le Pèlerin*. Even Hartmann admits, however, that the parts of Dryden's play which he mentions can only be said to recall things in Molière, adding, "wirklicher Einfluss steht jedoch nirgends fest." In spite of this, Miss Sherwood and Nicoll have copied Hartmann's suggestions as if they referred to demonstrable borrowings. Nicoll says (*A History of Restoration Drama, 1660-1700*, p. 174) that part of *L'Ecole des femmes* "was employed . . . by Dryden in *The Spanish Friar*." And on the next page he exaggerates Hartmann's statements even more by declaring that *Le Médecin malgré lui* "gave scenes to Dryden for *The Spanish Friar*."

<sup>169</sup> "Political Aspects of Dryden's *Amboyna* and *The Spanish Friar*," *Essays and Studies in English and Comparative Literature*, in the series in Language and Literature, University of Michigan Publications, VIII (1932), 119-132.

1680 could not possibly have affected it, and that from 1678 to 1684 he was being paid regularly, even though not in full. The examination of the sources given above ought to be a further indication that Dryden was not necessarily attacking anybody, and that if the play shows animus it is as likely to be the animus of Bremond as of Dryden.<sup>167</sup>

Scott's claim that the play is an attack on monasticism rather than on Catholicism and that Dryden's conversion to Rome at the accession of James II in 1686 was not therefore a sudden about-face has some truth in it, perhaps, and it is significant that Charles II, already secretly a Catholic, had the play given at Court on two occasions.<sup>168</sup> Nevertheless, it cannot be gainsaid that there are things in the play that no incipient Catholic would write, and the epilogue is certainly anti-Catholic.<sup>169</sup> It says in part:

There's none, I'm sure, who is a friend to love,  
But will our Friar's character approve: . . .  
Our church, alas! (as Rome objects) does want  
These ghostly comforts for the falling saint:  
This gains them their whore-converts, and may be  
One reason of the growth of Popery.

The man who wrote those last lines, or who allowed them to be added to his play, must have been far from conversion to Catholicism. It seems likely, then, that Dryden's conversion

<sup>167</sup> The political significance of *The Spanish Friar* is usually exaggerated. Many of its apparent allusions to politics are probably accidental. After the Revolution, for instance, Queen Mary ordered the play to be given before her (June, 1689), when, to her confusion, many of the lines which referred to Leonora's treatment of the old king were taken by the audience to refer to Mary's treatment of James II (see *Works*, VI, 400, n). Naturally Dryden could not have intended them so.

<sup>168</sup> Nicoll, *op cit*, p. 311. The dates were March 8, 1679/80, and November 29, 1684.

<sup>169</sup> It was published as "By a Friend of the Author's," but it soon appeared in *Poems Relating to State Affairs* (pp. 385-386) under the name of Dryden; at any rate, it could not have been added to his play without his permission.

was a sudden one, and that in 1686 he was sorry for the lines he had written seven years earlier.<sup>170</sup> In this connection Cibber's statement might be noted, that Dryden was "afterwards so much concerned for having ridiculed the character of the Friar, that it impaired his health."<sup>171</sup>

There are other possible allusions to contemporary affairs. It has been suggested that the last two lines of the play,

But let the bold conspirator beware,  
For heaven makes princes its peculiar care,

may have been addressed to the Whigs. Also, the character of Torrismond, a man of supposedly base birth who has a noble soul, may have been suggested by Monmouth,<sup>172</sup> though, as has been shown, the hero of Quinault's *Astrate* had a much more demonstrable influence than did Monmouth. It is possibly true also that Raymond's opinion of the rabble in Act IV, Scene 2, is really Dryden's opinion of the Londoners, who alternated between supporting the Whigs and Tories:

<sup>170</sup> Dryden had thrown many taunts at Catholics earlier. In V, 1, of *The Rival-Ladies*, for instance, when the captain of the vessel suggests to the pirate that their prisoners be sold to the Turk, the pirate replies "Pray, sir, let us reserve the lady to our own uses, it were a shame to good Catholics to give her up to infidels."

<sup>171</sup> Theophilus Cibber, *An Account of the Lives of the Poets*, III, 91. *The Spanish Friar* was written, it should be remembered, just after the discovery of the Popish Plot in 1678.

Langbaine says (*op cit*, p. 171) "Whether Mr Dryden intended his Character of *Dominick* as a Satyr on Romish Priests only, or on the Clergy of all Opinions in general, I know not but sure I am, that he might have spar'd his Reflecting Quotation in the Front of his Play

Ut melius possis fallere sume togam.

"But the truth is, ever since a certain Worthy Bishop refus'd Orders to a certain Poet, Mr. Dryden has declar'd open defiance against the whole Clergy."

Scott points out (*Works*, I, 358 and n) that this charge was often made.

<sup>172</sup> In Act II, Scene 1 (*Works*, VI, 439), Torrismond says:

"Good heavens, why gave you me a monarch's soul,  
And crusted it with base plebeian clay?"

As has been pointed out, these words have a resemblance to the lament of Absalom in *Absalom and Achitophel*.

You do not know the virtues of your city,  
What pushing force they have; some popular chief,  
More noisy than the rest, but cries Halloo,  
And, in a trice, the bellowing herd come out;  
The gates are barred, the ways are barricadoed.<sup>173</sup>

Shakespeare's influence on *The Spanish Friar* has been often mentioned, but never documented. Those who have spoken of the possibility of such influence have, in fact, been disposed to refer to the likeness between Dominic and Falstaff, as Scott did, to say something about the quality of the blank verse, and to let it go at that. Many reminiscences of Shakespeare can be found, however, in the lines of the play. This is not surprising. The influence of Shakespeare, which had been revealed shortly before in *All for Love*,<sup>174</sup> might be expected to continue, and it should be remembered that Dryden was working on *The Spanish Friar* simultaneously with his adaptation of *Troilus and Cressida*.<sup>175</sup> Besides, Shakespeare's example had been admitted by Dryden to be important in persuading him to omit bombast from *Aureng-Zebe* (1675) when he said in the prologue to that play that a "secret shame" invaded his breast at "Shakespeare's sacred name"; and Dryden's attack on fustian in the dedication to *The Spanish Friar*, together with his admission that some verses of his Maximin and Almanzor cried vengeance upon him for their extravagance, indicated that the influence still continued. The effect of this was noticed by Scott, who observed that the language of the play seldom rises into bombast and "maintains the mixture of force and dignity best adapted to the expression of tragic passion."<sup>176</sup>

<sup>173</sup> This recalls Dryden's description of the English (the Jews) in *Absalom and Achitophel*, lines 44-68.

<sup>174</sup> Probably first acted in 1677

<sup>175</sup> See also the evidence of Shakespearean reminiscences in *Mr Limberham*, which was written about a year before *The Spanish Friar*. See p. 208.

<sup>176</sup> *Works*, VI, 399.



But, although Shakespeare seems likely to have been the one who taught Dryden to write such blank verse, it is obvious that this cannot be proved, particularly in view of the fact that nearly all the other Elizabethans also wrote it well. There are, however, other indications that Dryden was sensitive at this time to Shakespeare's influence.

The lines at the beginning of *The Spanish Friar*, for example, are apparently imitated from the opening of *Hamlet*. A quotation of the two passages will show this. *The Spanish Friar* commences with a change of the watch:

*Alphonso*: Stand: give the word.

*Pedro*: The Queen of Aragon.

*Alphonso*: Pedro? — how goes the night?

*Pedro*: She wears apace.<sup>177</sup>

Hamlet begins likewise:

*Bernardo*: Who's there?

*Francisco*: Nay answer me: Stand & unfold your selfe.

*Bernardo*: Long liue the King.

*Francisco*: Bernardo?

*Bernardo*: He.

*Francisco*: You come most carefully upon the houre.

*Bernardo*: 'Tis now strook twelue, get thee to bed, Francisco.<sup>178</sup>

Again, when Gomez finds that Lorenzo has run away with his wife and money and cries out: "O my gold! my wife! my

<sup>177</sup> *The Spanish Friar*, I, 1.

<sup>178</sup> *Hamlet*, I, 1. If the two passages be carefully compared it will be seen that Dryden has imitated Shakespeare not merely in opening the play with a change of the watch at night — which might have been accidental — but that: (1) A password is given in both passages; (2) This password consists of the name of the ruler of the country, (3) The man to be relieved thinks he recognizes the other and mentions his name questioningly in both cases; (4) The time of night is mentioned in both cases.

wife! my gold! " <sup>179</sup> Dryden seems to be recalling *The Merchant of Venice*, in which Salanio quotes Shylock as crying out: " My daughter, O my ducats, O my daughter." <sup>180</sup>

Finally, in Act V, Scene 1, the bedchamber scene, the Queen and her maid Teresa mourn over the sudden death of Torrismond's love in a way that recalls Act IV, Scene 3, of *Othello*, in which Desdemona and Emilia are represented just after Othello has treated his wife as a strumpet; and the introduction of a sad song in both cases makes the likeness rather striking <sup>181</sup>

But, although there seems to be abundant reason for the claim that Dryden reveals Shakespeare's as well as Quinault's influence in *The Spanish Friar*, it is obvious that the result of this influence was not always altogether good. Dryden's attempt to make his characters soar into the realms of poetry under the stress of emotion, for instance, is not always successful, and the failures are painful failures. The worst parts of *The Spanish Friar* are much poorer than anything in the heroic plays, for in the latter the whole atmosphere is so artificial that one is not apt to think of comparing it with reality, while in this play the attempt to portray real human emotion brings Dryden into unfortunate comparison with Shakespeare and emphasizes his lack of the higher qualities of imagination. The end of Act II, Scene 1, is a good illustration of this:

<sup>179</sup> *The Spanish Friar*, IV, 1.

<sup>180</sup> *The Merchant of Venice*, II, 8. In *Don Sebastian*, IV, 2 (*Works*, VII, 419), the Mufti, when he finds that he is robbed of his daughter and his jewels, mentions the jewels first.

<sup>181</sup> There is a possibility, too, that later in the scene, when Leonora kneels and conjures Torrismond " by all the pleasures of our nuptial bed " to tell her what's wrong, and refuses to rise until he does so, Dryden was influenced by Act II, Scene 2, of *Julius Caesar*, where Portia acts and speaks in much the same way in order to persuade Brutus to confide in her.

*Torrismond:*

That, that's the wound! I see you set so high,  
As no desert or services can reach. —  
Good heavens, why gave you me a monarch's soul,  
And crusted it with base plebeian clay?  
Why gave you me desires of such extent,  
And such a span to grasp them? Sure, my lot  
By some o'erhasty angel was misplaced  
In fate's eternal volume! — But I rave,  
And, like a giddy bird in dead of night,  
Fly round the fire that scorches me to death.

*Leonora:*

Yet, Torrismond, you've not so ill deserved,  
But I may give you counsel for your cure.

*Torrismond:*

I cannot, nay, I wish not to be cured.

*Leonora:*

(*Aside*) Nor I, heaven knows!

*Torrismond:*

There is a pleasure, sure,  
In being mad, which none but madmen know!  
Let me indulge it; let me gaze for ever!  
And, since you are too great to be beloved,  
Be greater, greater yet, and be adored.

*Leonora:*

These are the words which I must only hear  
From Bertran's mouth, they should displease from you:  
I say they should; but women are so vain,  
To like the love, though they despise the lover.  
Yet, that I may not send you from my sight  
In absolute despair, — I pity you.

*Torrismond:*

Am I then pitied! I have lived enough! —  
Death, take me in this moment of my joy;  
But, when my soul is plunged in long oblivion,  
Spare this one thought! let me remember pity,  
And, so deceived, think all my life was blessed.

*Leonora:*

What if I add a little to my alms?  
If that would help, I could cast in a tear  
To your misfortunes.

*Torrismond:*

A tear! You have o'erbid all my past sufferings,  
And all my future too!

*Leonora:*

Were I no queen —  
Or you of royal blood —

*Torrismond:*

What have I lost by my forefathers' fault!  
Why was not I the twentieth by descent  
From a long restive race of droning kings?  
Love! what a poor omnipotence hast thou,  
When gold and titles buy thee?

*Leonora:*

(*Sighs*) Oh, my torture! —

*Torrismond:*

Might I presume, — but oh, I dare not hope  
That sigh was added to your alms for me!

*Leonora:*

I give you leave to guess, and not forbid you  
To make the best construction for your love:  
Be secret and discreet; these fairy favours  
Are lost, when not concealed. — Provoke not Bertran. —  
Retire: I must no more but this, — Hope Torrismond. (*Exit*)

*Torrismond:*

She bids me hope; O heavens, she pities me!  
And pity still foreruns approaching love,  
As lightning does the thunder! Tune your harps,  
Ye angels, to that sound; and thou, my heart,  
Make room to entertain thy flowing joy.  
Hence, all my griefs and every anxious care;  
One word, and one kind glance, can cure despair. (*Exit*)

A complete critical understanding of *The Spanish Friar* is not possible without a realization of what Dryden's sources were. Attempts to trace the Friar's descent from Falstaff or Lopez are seen to be futile when his true source, *Le Pelerin*, is examined. And the limitations of the serious plot are certainly explained in part when we know that it was influenced by dramatists so widely different as are Quinault and Shakespeare.

### VIII

*Don Sebastian* (1689)<sup>182</sup> and Dryden's last drama, *Love Triumphant; or, Nature will Prevail* (1693), are not nearly so interesting to a student of Dryden's comedy as are the other tragicomedies. In the first place, the comic plots take up much less space than do the serious plots which accompany them; the Antonio-Morayma plot is, in fact, only a little more than a third as long as the tragic plot of *Don Sebastian*. In the second place, the comic plots of the plays are not very important as literature. Farce was now triumphing on the stage, and Dryden was too good a business man not to continue what had succeeded in *The Spanish Friar*.

The comic part of *Don Sebastian* resembles that of *The Spanish Friar* not only in its farcical nature, but also in its ridicule of the clergy, though now it is a Moorish Mufti rather than a Catholic friar who is the butt of the humor.<sup>183</sup> Moreover, the source of part of the comic plot is the novel that had been used in *The Spanish Friar*, Bremond's *Pelerin*.

It has never been noticed before that this was Dryden's source, even in the later editions of Langbaine's work, where *Don Sebastian* was discussed. It must be owned that this is

<sup>182</sup> Queen Mary saw it on December 4, 1689. See Nicoll, *A History of Restoration Drama*, p. 314.

<sup>183</sup> Collier was angrier at Dryden for his treatment of the Mufti than for his treatment of the Friar. See *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, pp. 64-66.

not surprising, since Dryden has here disguised his use of Bremond much more carefully than he had in *The Spanish Friar*. His reason for doing this was probably the recent appearance, in 1688, of the first pirated edition of Langbaine's book on the drama under the title of *Momus Triumphans*. This contained an extended attack on Dryden and his "plagiaries."<sup>184</sup> He apparently was careful in *Don Sebastian* to give Langbaine no more ammunition. That this is so is supported by Dryden's evident consciousness, as revealed in the preface to the play, of the great plagiary hunter's attack. There Dryden points out that the ancients built their dramas "on known fables" without being accused of stealing.<sup>185</sup>

When one fears charges of plagiarism, it might be observed, there are two courses open either to point out the sources in the preface; or to try to disguise them so well that no one else is likely to point them out. In *Don Sebastian* Dryden has taken the first course with regard to the serious plot, admitting in the preface that he has followed, not too closely, a French novel of the same name as the play.<sup>186</sup> With regard to

<sup>184</sup> Dryden apparently disguised the source of the comic plot of *Love Triumphant*, if there is one, even better

<sup>185</sup> Langbaine's answer to this defense is made in 1691. He then declares (*op cit*, 162) that he did not accuse any poet of plagiarism merely for borrowing his plots. "But," he continues, "tho' the Poet be allow'd to borrow his Foundation from other Writers, I presume that Language ought to be his own, and when at any time we find a Poet translating whole Scenes from others Writings, I hope we may without offense call him a Plagiary which if granted, I may accuse Mr Dryden of Theft, notwithstanding this Defence [i.e. the preface to *Don Sebastian*], and inform the Reader, that he equivocates in this Instance of *Oedipus* [which Dryden had given as an example of a play which uses an old idea, but does not steal], for tho' he stole not from *Corneille* in that Play, yet he has borrow'd very much from the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of *Sophocles*, as likewise from that of *Seneca*"

<sup>186</sup> Langbaine (*ibid*) mentions this novel "A french Novel call'd *Don Sebastian Roy de Portugal*, translated into English" I have been unable to secure a copy. Summers says (*Dryden, The Dramatic Works*, VI, 9) that there is no indication that Dryden consulted this book, that is, that Dryden's play is no more like this than it is like any history which gives the facts of Don Sebastian's life.

the comic plot he has taken the other course. As has been said, he has altered and rewritten his source. But in spite of this, I think that there is no doubt that Dryden did use Bremond.

In Bremond's novel, *Le Pelerin*,<sup>187</sup> Camille makes an assignation with the marchioness with whom he is in love. She writes him to be "à onze heures de nuit au dessous de mes fenestres."<sup>188</sup> When he arrives at the appointed place, however, the ugly old governor's wife sees him first and has him brought to her room. Thinking that the lady before him is the marchioness, Camille climbs into her bed. In a few moments, when he discovers his mistake, the sudden falling off of his passionate embraces angers the old lady so much that he is in danger of being betrayed. But the maid warns her mistress that the governor is coming to bed, and Camille leaves. Later he explains his coldness to the governor's wife by saying that it was caused by "le respect, qu'il devoit au Gouverneur."<sup>189</sup>

In *Don Sebastian*, Antonio, whose position as a slave of the Mufti makes his gallant activities as dangerous as are those of Camille in *Le Pelerin*, keeps an assignation which Morayma, the Mufti's daughter, has arranged by letter. But the Mufti's wife, Morayma's stepmother, arrives and Antonio, like Camille, thinks that she is his beloved and embraces her passionately. He soon finds out his mistake, however, and discontinues his lovemaking, explaining, as Camille had done, that it is respect for the lady's husband that makes him hesitate. His words are: ". . . I have a scruple to betray my master."<sup>190</sup>

Let me say again that Dryden has changed greatly what he took from his source, but he has not improved on it. The rest

<sup>187</sup> See p. 129, n. 152.

<sup>188</sup> *Le Pelerin*, p. 56.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>190</sup> *Don Sebastian*, III, 2.

of the scene, in which he departs completely from Bremond, is much less effective than what has been cited.

Another part of *Don Sebastian* was also suggested by an incident related by Bremond. In *Le Pelerin* the Marquis, the husband of Camille's mistress, disguises himself so as to look as much as possible like Camille and waits outside his wife's window, hoping that she will mistake him for her lover and reveal her intrigue. Camille's confidant and pimp, Le Père André, is the one who is deceived, however. He rushes up to the jealous man, embraces him, and, still under the impression that he is Camille, begins to talk about an assignation with the marchioness. The Marquis chases him away. Finally someone in the room above, thinking that the man waiting below looks suspicious, drops a vessel of ordure on the Marquis' head.<sup>191</sup>

In the same way the Mufti of *Don Sebastian*, anxious because of his wife's interest in the slave Antonio, waits outside her window disguised like him. In this case Morayma, the daughter, is deceived by the disguise, rushes up to her father, hands him a casket of jewels, and reveals the fact that she and Antonio have planned to run away together.<sup>192</sup> This time there is no chamber pot from above, but Morayma tells her father that he deserves to be so saluted.<sup>193</sup> As before, Dryden does not translate from his source. He writes, rather, as if he were remembering the incident, perhaps without having reread it since he had used Bremond's novel for *The Spanish Friar*. And, as in the other borrowing just mentioned, he soon departs from his original. Morayma is clever enough to call the other slaves, have her father seized as a slave who has stolen the casket she has just given him, and escape with her lover. For this there is no suggestion in Bremond.

<sup>191</sup> *Le Pelerin*, pp. 97-103.

<sup>192</sup> *Don Sebastian*, IV, 2.

<sup>193</sup> Morayma is more specific than I have been in designating the vessel.



Dryden has changed the relationship of the characters in his source and has made Antonio come within an ace of seducing, or rather of being seduced by, the stepmother of his wife to be. This would have been close to incest, and it is interesting to count up the number of times Dryden used the idea of incest in his last plays. It is in his *Oedipus*, of necessity. It is also in the comic portion of *The Spanish Friar*, though the act is fortuitously averted, and in the serious part of *Love Triumphant*, where the principals think that they are feeling incestuous passion, though at the end their parents are redistributed in such a way as to make everything all right. In the serious plot of *Don Sebastian* incest actually occurs. This interest in abnormal passion indicated, perhaps, the strain which Dryden was under, especially toward the end, to stimulate the flagging interest of his audiences. Nothing unusual in the way of rant and heroics could be provided after Almanzor's bombast, and once-surprising combinations of love—such as having the lovers of different station or race or members of warring families—were no longer surprising. So, like Ford, who sixty years earlier had responded to a similar situation with *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, Dryden wrote about incestuous love.

In the comic plots of *Don Sebastian* and *Love Triumphant* Dryden shows in another way that he is finding difficulty in satisfying tastes that have become deadened by too much spice. Even more wilfully than in *Mr. Limberham* Dryden here touches depths of coarseness and vulgarity. There is almost no lightness or wit or cleverness (as there had been in *Marriage à la Mode* and *The Mock Astrologer*) to outweigh the bawdiness of pun and allusion, which dwell, as so often in Dryden, on the anatomy of the sexes and the mechanics of the sex act. In the earlier plays there was innuendo. Here it becomes crude, heavy-handed vulgarity. It sounds almost

like the bawdiness of senility.<sup>194</sup> Antonio is an unsubtle whoremaster; Carlo and Sancho of *Love Triumphant* are no less crude, and Dalinda of the same play is as unvarnished a prostitute as can be found in Restoration drama.

It may be, however, that these characters fulfilled the purpose for which they were created even better than did Celadon and Florimel of *The Maiden Queen* or the four witty lovers of *Marriage à la Mode*. Certainly they furnish a no less striking contrast to the heroic characters of the serious plot than did their predecessors. Moreover, there was no danger that their standards might seem more rational than those of the tragic protagonists, as had happened in Dryden's earlier tragicomedies, in which the serious part is almost made to seem ridiculous. Antonio and Morayma, and the later Carlo, Sancho, and Dalinda, are to this degree like the comic characters in Shakespeare's tragedies. They are laughed at and forgotten. They never steal the limelight from the serious characters.

The discovery of the source from which Dryden drew some of the situations for the comic plot of *Don Sebastian* is not important on the face of it, for Dryden followed it far from closely. On the other hand, this very fact is significant. It indicates, as has been said, that since Langbaine's work appeared Dryden had turned over a new leaf, and that in his last plays he had decided to take care about laying himself open to another charge of plagiarism. This decision did not

<sup>194</sup> It is interesting to observe in this connection that Dryden's most bawdy prologue, the one to *The Mock Astrologer*, expresses the idea that he is very, very tired of writing (see p. 164). The prologues and the epilogues which he wrote for other men at five or ten pounds each and in which one may suppose he was not deeply interested are likewise often pornographic. See especially Dryden's epilogue to Charles Saunders' *Tamerlane the Great* (Cambridge edition of *Dryden's Poetical Works*, p. 104), his prologue to an unknown play of about the same time (*ibid.*), and his epilogue to Thomas Southerne's *Loyal Brother* (*ibid.*, pp. 123-124).

prevent him from making an admitted adaptation of *Amphytrion* for the English stage,<sup>192</sup> but it did have an effect on the works he intended to claim as his own. It probably explains why critics have found no source for the comic plot of Dryden's last play, *Love Triumphant*, and why the serious part of the play is only vaguely like its source.<sup>193</sup>

## IX

The serious plot of *Love Triumphant* has about the same relationship to Beaumont and Fletcher's *A King and No King* that the serious plot of *The Spanish Friar* had had to Quinault's *L'Astrate*. Dryden has certainly been influenced by the general development of the plot of Beaumont and Fletcher's play, and he has now and then followed it rather closely, but there are no verbal reminiscences.<sup>197</sup>

<sup>192</sup> See Chapter V.

<sup>193</sup> The result of Langbaine's attack is also seen in the preface to *Cleomenes*, where Dryden carefully outlines his sources.

In the prologue to *Love Triumphant* Dryden claims that the play has no source, saying

"But here's a story, which no books relate,  
Coin'd from our own old poet's addle-pate."

<sup>197</sup> Edwin Schroder, *Dryden's last Drama*. Schroder has made a very thorough comparison of *Love Triumphant* to *A King and No King*, and for that reason no further examination of the relationship between the two plays is necessary here. Schroder ignores, however, the possibility that there is a source for the comic plot.

Genest's comment on the serious plot (*op cit.*, II, 52-53) is interesting: "The conduct of this plot is so unnatural, that it almost warrants a suspicion that the serious scenes of this play, tho' not acted until 1693, were written before the extravagant notions of love and honour were exploded." Two things might be said in support of this theory: (1) Don Garcia of Navarre's transfer of allegiance from Victoria, who does not love him, to Celidea, who does, is strongly reminiscent of a like happening in the serious plot of *Love in a Tub*; (2) There are several passages in *Love Triumphant* in rhyme, and Dryden had not used rhyme in his plays for more than ten years. These passages have all the earmarks of Dryden's earlier work. I shall give an example from Act IV, Scene 1, of *Love Triumphant*. In spite of her love for Alphonso,

Though no source has been found for the comic part of *Love Triumphant* its farce is of the *commedia dell' arte* variety. It is like what Dryden had already taken from Molière in *Sir Martin Mar-all*.<sup>198</sup> Sancho's foolish mistakes when he tries to deceive Dalinda's father<sup>199</sup> might, indeed, very well

Victoria has just told him that she cannot disobey her father by marrying him, though she attempts to prove the depth of her passion by showing him a dagger with which she has determined to kill herself before consummating the hateful marriage which her father is arranging with Alphonso's rival. They speak as follows

"Alphonso:

That fatal proof I never did desire.

"Victoria:

And yet a proof more fatal you require,  
Which would with infamy my name pursue;  
To fly my father, and to follow you.

"Alphonso:

Your love you forfeit, if you go away.

"Victoria:

I forfeit my obedience, if I stay . . .

"Alphonso:

Then, when you vowed your love, you falsely swore

"Victoria

I love you much, but love my honour more.

"Alphonso

You hate my rival, yet you take the way  
To make you his inevitable prey

"Victoria:

Beasts fear not more to be the hunter's spoil.

"Alphonso:

Then, sure, you would not run into the toil.  
How ill your actions with your words agree!

"Victoria.

This friend is still at hand to set me free

(Holding up the dagger) "

<sup>198</sup> The farce is much less well done than in *Sir Martin*. As a contemporary letter quoted by Scott (*Works*, VIII, 370, n) says, "the comical part descends beneath the style and show of a Bartholomew-Fair Droll."

<sup>199</sup> *Love Triumphant*, III, 2.

have been suggested by those of Molière's *Lélie* and Dryden's imitation of him in *Sir Martin*. Hartmann<sup>200</sup> mentions several places in which he believes *Love Triumphant* resembles Molière's *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, but the passages cited in the two plays are not close enough to sustain his claim. For instance, he cites Act II, Scenes 9 and 10, of the French play as having given Dryden suggestions for Act V, Scene 1, of *Love Triumphant*,<sup>201</sup> but absolutely the only resemblance between the two passages lies in the fact that in each children are brought upon the stage. In *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* these children are produced by Nerine and Lucette as the fruit of the marriage each claims to have had with Pourceaugnac, there are three of them, one belonging to Nerine and two to Lucette. In *Love Triumphant* the two children are the bastards that Dalinda has had by her former lover. In spite of the slenderness of Hartmann's proof of his statement, he has been quoted by nearly every critic who has touched on Molière's influence on Dryden.<sup>202</sup>

Hartmann was right, however, in feeling that the farce of the play is of the same kind as that in *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*. It is nearer to Molière's kind of farce than it is to D'Urfey's, for instance; but all that can be done to prove that this is true is to point out the general resemblance of certain scenes in it (III, 2, especially) to many of Molière's farces.

In view of the poor quality of the comic plots of the last two of Dryden's tragicomedies it might be concluded that he was only an adapter; that, though he could do well enough with *Amphitryon* when he had Molière as a model and with

<sup>200</sup> *Op cit.*, p 40

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>202</sup> See, for instance, Margaret Sherwood (*op cit*, p 44). When she says there that *Love Triumphant* shows the influence of *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, she is evidently following Hartmann Nicoll (*op. cit*, p. 176) makes the same error.

*The Maiden Queen* when he took his material from French romances, the fatigue of constructing his own comic plots, as he apparently did in these last plays, left him no energy for adorning them and making them sparkle. This suggestion might be acceptable were it not for *Marriage à la Mode*. Except for it, all Dryden's best comedies are either adaptations, like *Sir Martin Mar-all* and *Amphitryon*, or plays in which borrowed material is an important part, like *The Maiden Queen* and *The Mock Astrologer*. But the ranking of the comic part of *Marriage à la Mode* at the top or close to it makes this theory untenable.

## X

It has been shown (to summarize the somewhat heterogeneous material in this chapter) that Dryden's tragicomedies, though they all utilized the effect to be derived from the contrast of a comic with a serious plot, were varied in the kind of comedy they presented and even, apparently, in the audience they appealed to. The comic portions of *The Maiden Queen* and of *Marriage à la Mode* are a part of the manners tradition. Those of *The Spanish Friar*, *Don Sebastian*, and *Love Triumphant* are in the low comedy of farcical intrigue tradition. As for his sources, Dryden is seen to have been influenced chiefly, as in his other plays, by English drama in his form and manner, but to have borrowed some of his material in nearly every play from foreign sources, presumably because he felt that the borrowings were not likely to be discovered when they were translated from another language. Finally, after the appearance of Langbaine's attack, he took even greater care to conceal his originals, altering them so much that they are only faintly recognizable, or not at all.

## CHAPTER IV

### THREE COMEDIES: "THE MOCK ASTROLOGER," "THE ASSIGNATION," AND "MR. LIMBERHAM"

THE comedies to be discussed in the present chapter are *An Evening's Love; or, The Mock Astrologer* (1668), *The Assination; or, Love in a Nunnery* (1672), and *Mr. Limberham; or, the Kind Keeper* (1678). The only reason for treating them in the same chapter is that they are what remains after the early comedies, the tragicomedies, and the adaptations of Molière<sup>1</sup> have been studied. Certain resemblances of the three plays could be pointed out, but the appearance of unity that that might give the chapter would be specious. When such resemblances are important, they will be discussed in connection with the separate plays.

#### I

After having noted how critics have neglected the sources of most of Dryden's comedies and tragicomedies, one is surprised to find that two dissertations have been partly devoted to the sources of *The Mock Astrologer*. The first of these discussions is by Philip Ott.<sup>2</sup> In treating *The Mock Astrologer* Ott does not confine himself to Molière's influence, but discusses at length the other important source, Thomas Corneille's *Feint Astrologue*. J.-E. Gillet in the part of Molière

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter V

<sup>2</sup> Philip Ott, *Über das Verhältnis des Lustspiel-dichters Dryden zu Molière*. This appeared in 1888.

*en Angleterre* devoted to *The Mock Astrologer*<sup>3</sup> has also given a just exposition of Dryden's use of Corneille; his material on the Molière influence, and particularly the parallel passages from the play by Dryden and from several by Molière,<sup>4</sup> is even more enlightening.<sup>5</sup>

As I have said, one is surprised at first to find so much on the sources of this play, when others have been neglected. Langbaine guided Ott and Gillet to their material, but he might have guided them and other scholars to the sources of many of Dryden's comedies. What is the reason for the discrepancy?

The answer is that Scott and Saintsbury are to blame. As has been noted in previous chapters, Scott usually pays little attention to sources,<sup>6</sup> and Saintsbury intimates that the sources mentioned by Langbaine existed chiefly in his imagination. How wrong Scott and Saintsbury are has been shown in previous chapters. When discussing *The Mock Astrologer*, however, Scott could not ignore Dryden's own statement which he made in the preface<sup>7</sup> that the source of the play was *Le Feint Astrologue*,<sup>8</sup> and for some reason Scott bestirred

<sup>3</sup> J.-E. Gillet, *Mémoires de l'Académie royale de Belgique*, Deuxième Série, Classe des Lettres, Vol. 9, 1913

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, Appendix II, pp 169-177.

<sup>5</sup> Carl Hartmann, *Einfluss Molière's auf Dryden's komisch-dramatische Dichtungen*, is not very good on this play. He underestimates the importance of Molière's influence and does not give parallel passages from Molière and Dryden, as he does for other plays and might well have done here.

Montague Summers, *Dryden, The Dramatic Works*, Vol II, adds nothing to the work of Ott and Gillet except for his suggestion that a part of IV, 3, of *The Mock Astrologer* may be imitated from the *Aulularia* of Plautus. See p. 160.

<sup>6</sup> Scott repeats several times his conviction that an examination of sources is not a part of his duties as editor.

<sup>7</sup> *Works*, III, 250

<sup>8</sup> Dryden also mentions *El Astrologo Fingido* of Calderón, which Corneille had used as a source, but Dryden apparently employs only the French play. His use of Spanish words is not extensive enough to indicate that he knew the Spanish. See p. 5, n. 22.



himself, contrary to his usual practice, to examine *Le Dépit amoureux* and *Les Précieuses ridicules* at Langbaine's suggestion.<sup>9</sup> Saintsbury, naturally, repeated what Scott had said. The number of monographs written as a result indicates, I think, the prestige of Dryden's two editors.

Since the sources of *The Mock Astrologer* have been thoroughly studied in the works mentioned above, I shall refer the reader to them for the details of Dryden's borrowings for this play. I shall summarize, with page references, Ott's and Gillet's works, and use them in drawing my conclusions, but shall not reproduce them in detail.

The action of *The Mock Astrologer* is divided into two plots, the first being the intrigue between Wildblood and Jacintha and their servants, and the second including Belamy's duping of Alonzo by pretending to be an astrologer, Don Melchor's deceitful wooing of Alonzo's daughter Theodosia and her cousin Aurelia at the same time, and Don Lopez's wooing of Aurelia.

The first of these plots is to some extent suggested by Molière's *Le Dépit amoureux*. Dryden's Wildblood and Jacintha correspond to Eraste and Lucile; his Beatrix and Maskall to Marinette and Gros-René of the French comedy. Dryden has added to his source many passages of excellent raillery between the gallant and lady, passages in the manner of the combats of wit of the earlier *Maiden Queen* and the later *Marriage à la Mode*,<sup>10</sup> and he has distributed what he did bor-

<sup>9</sup> Langbaine says in *An Account of the English Dramatic Poets*, pp. 163-164 "The main Plot of this Play is built on that of Corneille's [sic] . . . The Scene between Alonzo and Lopez, p. 39, is translated from Molière's *Dépit Amoureux*, Act 2, Sc. 6 Camilla's begging a new Gown of Don Melchor, p. 61, from the same Act 1, Sc. 2 The Love Quarrel between Wild-blood and Jacinta [sic], Maskall and Beatrix, Act 4 Sc. the last, is copied from the same Play, Act 4 Sc. 3, and 4"

<sup>10</sup> Gillet, *op cit*, p. 89. Gillet suggests, however (wrongly, I think), that Shakespeare's Beatrice and Benedick influenced these witty characters.

row among the characters in the other plot at times. His debt to Molière in this plot, however, is considerable.

Dryden owes even more to the source of the second plot. This plot is closely imitated from Thomas Corneille's *Le Feint Astrologue*.<sup>11</sup> In it Dryden's Bellamy corresponds to Corneille's Don Fernand, Dryden's Don Melchor to Corneille's Don Juan, Don Lopez to Don Luis, Don Alonzo to Léandre, Donna Theodosia to Lucrèce, and Donna Aurelia to Léonor.<sup>12</sup> The valet Maskall, so far as he enters into this part of the plot, corresponds to Corneille's Philipin.<sup>13</sup> In this plot, too, Dryden has made some use of material from the source of the first plot, Molière's *Le Dépit amoureux*. The farcical conversation of Don Alonzo and Don Lopez in Act III, for instance, follows a part of Molière's comedy closely.<sup>14</sup>

A résumé of Dryden's borrowings act by act will show what a *mélange* the play is.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87. Dorothy Canfield, *Corneille and Racine in England*, p. 76, claims that Dryden has not used much of Corneille's play, but both Gillet and Ott prove otherwise.

<sup>12</sup> Nicoll in his *History of Restoration Drama*, p. 173, n. 2, recommends Appendix VIII of W. Harvey Jellie's *Les Sources du théâtre anglais à l'époque de la Restauration* to the student of this play. The appendix is of questionable value. Harvie Jellie has placed the supposedly corresponding characters in Dryden, Corneille, Molière, and Mlle de Scudéry in parallel columns, but he has made the mistake of placing Corneille's Don Juan opposite Dryden's Bellamy. Moreover, such lists convey the false idea that all the four works are more or less parallel throughout, an idea which Harvie Jellie also gives in the text of his dissertation.

<sup>13</sup> Philip Ott (*op. cit.*, p. 27) has placed the corresponding characters in Dryden and in Corneille in parallel lists. He has omitted from these lists, however, an indication of the correspondence between Maskall and Philipin.

<sup>14</sup> See p. 159.

<sup>15</sup> The story of the pretended astrologer in Mlle de Scudéry's *Ibrahim ou L'Illustre Bassa* is not mentioned in this outline, and rightly not, for, though Mrs. Pepys thought Dryden's play was "wholly taken out of the *Illustre Bassa*" (*Diary*, June 20, 1668), it is evident that the likeness between Mlle de Scudéry's story and Dryden's play results from the fact that she used Calderón, while Dryden used Corneille's play, which was also imitated from Calderón. Summers (*op. cit.*, Vol. II) avoids an actual examination of the

*Act I.* The first twenty lines of the play outline the somewhat "heroic" situation which involves Don Melchor, Don Lopez, and their love for Aurelia. This is the only portion of the whole comedy in blank verse. It is taken from Corneille, though not closely translated. After that the rest of Scene 1 is given over to the first view Wildblood and Bellamy have of their mistresses, and Maskall's interview with Beatrix for the purpose of finding out who these mistresses are. This part is all Dryden's, but it is interesting to observe how much Maskall's farcical device for enticing Beatrix to tell what he wants to know is in the manner of Molière's Gros-René. Scene 2, in which the two gallants first speak to their ladies in the chapel, is also Dryden's. It is largely taken up with the raillery of Wildblood and Jacintha, and is in the tradition of Celadon and Florimel, especially in its indelicacy. Act I is more original than the rest of the play, since Dryden had to bring his lovers together. The tradition of Restoration comedy demanded that he do so, for the convention of inconstancy made the first meeting the most passionate. In *The Maiden Queen*, *She Wou'd If She Cou'd*, and *The Sparagus Garden*, for instance, the lovers meet for the first time on the stage. Molière, on the other hand, represented his lovers as already acquainted. Dryden's exposition is, therefore, of necessity longer.

A bit of this act is borrowed from *L'École des maris*.<sup>16</sup>

*Act II.* The first seven pages of Act II are taken up with one of the best passages of raillery between Wildblood and Jacintha (discussed later). This part of the play is Dryden's own and is in his best manner. With the entrance of Bea-

source and observes (p. 254). "Mrs. Pepys was a great reader of de Scudéry, but 'wholly' is too gross an exaggeration."

Ott (*op cit*, pp. 24-26) has a brief résumé of the sources of this play.

<sup>16</sup> *Works*, III, 262. Gillet (*op cit*, Appendix II, pp. 169-170) gives the passage and its source in parallel columns.

trix<sup>17</sup> he begins to follow Corneille again, and the lack of cleverness in the speeches of Beatrix and Maskall shows how careless he has been at this point; for Beatrix and Maskall here have almost none of the wit they are to have later when their language is taken from Molière's characters. From here to the end of the act Dryden follows Corneille closely.<sup>18</sup>

*Act III.* The first part of Act III is very close to Corneille; there are a large number of translated lines in it.<sup>19</sup> With the entrance of Aurelia and Camilla<sup>20</sup> Dryden takes a bit from *Les Précieuses ridicules*<sup>21</sup> and thereafter represents Aurelia as an affected young lady. Except for the example given by Gillet, however, her affectations are not those of Molière's character. Indeed, the chief one is that she uses the adjective "furiously" too much, just as Melantha of *Marriage à la Mode* was later to use "Let me die." The farcical conversation between Alonzo and Lopez<sup>22</sup> is imitated very closely from *Le Dépit amoureux*, Act II, Scenes 7 and 8.<sup>23</sup> The rest of Dryden's act has to do with Wildblood and Jacintha and is his own.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Works*, III, 278.

<sup>18</sup> See Ott, *op cit*, p. 24.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, p. 25

<sup>20</sup> *Works*, III, 296

<sup>21</sup> See Gillet, *op cit*, p. 171. As he shows, the only speech of Aurelia that comes directly from Molière is her calling the looking-glass the "counsellor of graces." This expression comes from *Les Précieuses ridicules*, Scene 7. (This play is not divided into acts.)

<sup>22</sup> *Works*, III, 305-307.

<sup>23</sup> See Gillet, *op cit*, pp. 171-175. Gillet gives the reference to *Le Dépit amoureux* as Act II, Scene 6, since he uses an edition of Molière different from mine. Langbaine, who made the discovery first, also says Scene 6. See p. 156, n. 9.

<sup>24</sup> Dryden does not owe nearly so much to Molière in the Wildblood-Jacintha plot as he does to Corneille in the other plot. Toward the end of the play Dryden seems to grow tired of Wildblood and Jacintha. The first two acts contain nearly all their best wit. During the last three acts Jacintha assumes a variety of disguises, possibly evidence that Dryden is trying to make up for the lack of wit by intrigue. Toward the end he also fills in more often with borrowings from Molière.

*Act IV.* The first page of Act IV, Scene 1, follows Corneille, but with the entrance of Jacintha in the habit of a mulatto, Dryden continues his own Wildblood-Jacintha plot, now much less interesting than before.<sup>25</sup> The two other scenes of Act IV contain very little that is Dryden's. The first part of Scene 2<sup>26</sup> is closely imitated from two parts of Corneille.<sup>27</sup> Then comes a bit of twenty-five lines<sup>28</sup> taken from *Le Dépit amoureux*.<sup>29</sup> It is possible that the passage extending from page 335, line 12, to the end of Scene 2 was suggested by the *Aulularia* of Plautus,<sup>30</sup> though it may have been imitated from one of the many French and Italian plays which were inspired by Plautus' comedy.<sup>31</sup> The first part of the last scene of the act (Scene 3) is Dryden's, but the last part of it is imitated from *Le Dépit amoureux*, Act IV, Scenes 3 and 4.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Ott (*op cit*, p 26), for some reason hard to understand, likes the scenes in which Jacintha's only wit consists in disguising herself — he calls this part *ausgedehnte and original* — and dislikes her witty raillery.

<sup>26</sup> Works, III, 323-334

<sup>27</sup> See Ott, *op. cit*, p 26

<sup>28</sup> Works, III, 334.

<sup>29</sup> Gillet does not illustrate this borrowing with parallel passages, but Hartmann does, *op cit*, p 26.

<sup>30</sup> IV, 10 Plautus, The Loeb Classical Library, I, 310-318 Montague Summers makes this suggestion in *Dryden, The Dramatic Works*, II, 234. So far as I know, no source had hitherto been suggested for this portion of Dryden's play

<sup>31</sup> If Plautus' play was his immediate source, Dryden followed it much less closely than he followed his other sources for this comedy Summers points out (*op cit*, II, 234) that this part of the *Aulularia* was followed by Molière in *L'Avare* (V, 3), but that Dryden could not have used the latter play, since it appeared nearly three months after his own play *The Mock Astrologer* was first given on June 12, 1668, *L'Avare*, September 9, 1668

<sup>32</sup> Gillet, *op cit*, pp 175-177, illustrates this borrowing with parallel passages; but he does not give as much of the parallel as he should have done. For instance, these lines from *The Mock Astrologer*, IV, 3, should have been included

"Wildblood:

... Nothing vexes me, but that you should part with me so slightly, as though I were not worth your keeping. Well, 'tis a sign you never loved me.

*Act V.* Dryden's last act follows Corneille in the events which take place, but is much less close to Corneille's text than are the other parts which follow him. Here, as in the earlier acts, Dryden has inserted bits from other plays.<sup>33</sup> Don Melchor's actions when he is faced by the two women he has been wooing were undoubtedly suggested by the like scene in Molière's *Don Juan* (II, 5), in which the hero makes each of the two peasant girls, Charlotte and Mathurine, think that he loves her. The device of bringing all the young people together to hide from Don Alonzo in the garden house was added by Dryden. The farcical pretense that they were ghosts, by which Bellamy almost imposes on Alonzo, was suggested by Quinault's *L'Amant indiscret*,<sup>34</sup> from which Dryden had already borrowed extensively for *Sir Martin Mar-all*. Wildblood's and Jacintha's final provisos for and observations about their marriage<sup>35</sup> are Dryden's own. A bit at the very

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*Jacintha*

"Tis the least of your care whether I did or did not It may be it had been more for the quiet of myself, if I — but 'tis no matter, I'll not give you that satisfaction "

This quotation is based upon *Le Dépit amoureux*, IV, 3

*" Eraste*

. . . alors qu'on les aime, on ne peut en effet  
Se résoudre à les perdre .  
Non, Lucile, jamais vous ne m'avez aimé.

*" Lucile*

Hel! je crois que cela faiblement vous soucie.  
Peut-être en serait-il beaucoup mieux pour ma vie,  
Si je . . . Mais laissons là ces discours superflus  
Je ne dis point quels sont mes pensers là-dessus "

<sup>33</sup> Dryden has also changed Corneille's plot in one important particular. Instead of rewarding Don Melchor with Theodosia's hand, as Don Juan was rewarded with Lucrece's, he has him carried off in disgrace, while Bellamy wins Theodosia

<sup>34</sup> See Hartmann, *op cit*, p 27

<sup>35</sup> *Works*, III, 362-364 See quotation on pages 167-168.

end of the play is borrowed from the last scene of *Le Dépit amoureux*.<sup>86</sup>

The variety of Dryden's borrowings and the confusion with which they are combined can be seen from the résumé given above. And the confusion is more than a seeming one. For in this play Dryden has not integrated and unified what he took from Corneille and Molière and what he did himself. When Wildblood and Jacintha are on the stage we are in the licentious, witty world of Dryden himself; but suddenly new characters enter, for example, Beatrix and Maskall in Act II, Scene 1,<sup>87</sup> and we find ourselves forced to make the change in attitude necessary for the enjoyment of a drama of intrigue like Corneille's. And when Beatrix and Maskall are speaking Molière's lines, as they do, for instance, at the end of Act IV, we are in the atmosphere of *commedia dell' arte*.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>86</sup> This borrowing escaped the notice of Gillet.

Maskall, who is to marry Beatrix, is being threatened with cuckoldom. He protests against it. Bellamy insists:

"Bellamy: Why, thou wouldst not be so impudent, to marry Beatrix for thyself only?

"Beatrix: For all his ranting and tearing now, I'll pass my word, he shall degenerate into as tame and peaceable a husband, as a civil woman would wish to have."

Gros-René is threatened by cuckoldom in a similar way at the end of *Le Dépit amoureux* (V, 9). When he protests, Mascarille says

"Tu crois te marier pour toi tout seul, compère?"

And later he adds

"... Hel mon Dieu, tu feras  
Commes les autres font, et tu t'adouciras  
Ces gens, avant l'hymen, si fâcheux et critiques,  
Dégénèrent souvent en maris pacifiques"

Hartmann (*op cit.*, p. 27) has observed that the first of these speeches was borrowed, but he, too, missed the second

<sup>87</sup> *Works*, III, 278.

<sup>88</sup> In one instance Dryden has shown that he was aware of the contrast between the different parts of the play. In Act IV, Scene 2, Lopez tells Bellamy that he would like to discredit Don Melchor to Aurelia, but cannot. He says:

The explanation for this lack of homogeneity in Dryden's plot and characters seems to be that he was trying to please too many tastes at once. By the success of *Sir Martin Mar-all* (1667) he had seen that Molière's sort of farcical intrigue would please English audiences. By the popularity of *The Maiden Queen* (1667) and by that of the recent *She Wou'd If She Cou'd*<sup>39</sup> he had found that combats of wit would take. As for Corneille's play, he may have seen another English adaptation of it, the one which was published anonymously in 1668,<sup>40</sup> successful on the boards. He tried, therefore, to make a play like all of them.

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"... I have engaged my promise to that friend, to serve him in his passion to my mistress" Bellamy replies "We English seldom make such scruples, women are not comprised in our laws of friendship. They are *ferae naturae*, our common game, like hare and partridge. Every man has equal right to them, as he has to the sun and elements."

It seems likely that it was because he realized the contrast between these scenes and the rest of the play that Dryden represented Wildblood and Bellamy as Englishmen, young bloods who were in Spain as members of the English ambassador's retinue. This clever device might well have been used in the tragicomedies, where (as has been noted, p. 100, n. 80) Dryden has not troubled himself about the unlikelihood of having the characters of the comic plot hold their combats of English Restoration wit in romantic settings. Of course, the problem is not altogether solved here for, while Wildblood and Bellamy are represented as Englishmen, Jacintha and Theodosia, the former of whom is more than the equal of the men in wit, and at least as much in the manners tradition as they, are still Spanish.

Lopez' attempts to move Alonzo in behalf of Don Melchor (III, 1) and Alonzo's preventing him from speaking by his ever renewed invitation for him to go ahead and speak, which was taken from *Le Dépit amoureux* (II, 8), as has been said, is good farce, but it is not in keeping with Alonzo's character elsewhere in the play. In some scenes he is like Molière's Metaphraste, in others, like Corneille's Léandre. Only in one scene (IV, 2, see *Works*, III, 327-328) does Alonzo retain any of the characteristics he derives from Molière while he is acting in the part of the play taken from Corneille.

<sup>39</sup> *She Wou'd If She Cou'd* appeared in February, 1667/8, and *The Mock Astrologer* in June, 1668. Sedley's *Mulberry Garden* appeared a month before Dryden's play, probably not soon enough to influence it. See Nicoll's hand list of Restoration plays, *op cit*, Appendix C, pp. 348-376.

<sup>40</sup> Dorothy Canfield, *Corneille and Racine in England*, p. 72, says that the date of publication of the English adaptation is uncertain, since the title-



It would have been difficult for Dryden, even in his most energetic moods, to make a good comedy out of such various material, and when he wrote *The Mock Astrologer* he evidently felt less like striving for perfection than usual. He had put on four plays during the preceding year,<sup>41</sup> and he shows in the prologue to this play that he is tired of comedy and disillusioned about the value of struggling for perfection. In this prologue he writes:

When first our poet set himself to write,  
Like a young bridegroom on his wedding-night,  
He laid about him, and did so bestir him,  
His muse could never lie in quiet for him:  
But now his honey-moon is gone and past,  
Yet the ungrateful drudgery must last.  
And he is bound, as civil husbands do,  
To strain himself, in complaisance to you.  
To write in pain, and counterfeit a bliss,  
Like the faint smacking of an after-kiss.<sup>42</sup>

page of the copy in the British Museum is missing, together with the cast of characters. The University of Michigan copy, however, has the title-page with the date 1668 and the cast of characters. The title-page of this copy of the play is as follows. The / Feign'd Astrologer / a / Comodie / rule / Horat. Ep 2 Lib 2 / Magicos terrores, somnia sagas, / Nocturnos Lemures, portentaque Thesala rides? / rule / decorative emblem / rule / London, / Printed for Thomas Thornycroft, at the Eagle / and Child, near Worcester-house in the / Strand. 1668

It is not known whether or not the play was acted

<sup>41</sup> The four plays were *The Maiden Queen*, *Sir Martin Mar-all*, *The Wild Gallant*, with additions, and *The Tempest*

<sup>42</sup> Dryden's attitude toward the function and duty of a poet varied widely, with sudden changes. It is interesting to compare, for instance, this prologue, quoted above, with the preface to *Tyrannic Love*, which was published within two years of *The Mock Astrologer*, in which he declares (*Works*, III, 376-377)

"I . . . maintain, against the enemies of the stage, that patterns of piety, decently represented, and equally removed from the extremes of superstition and profaneness, may be of excellent use to second the precepts of our religion. By the harmony of words we elevate the mind to a sense of devotion, as our solemn music, which is inarticulate poesy, does in churches and by the lively images of piety, adorned by action, through the senses allure the soul, which, while it is charmed in a silent joy of what it sees and hears, is struck, at the same time, with a secret veneration of things celestial. . . ."

This passage is not a dainty one, but it illustrates my point too well for me to omit it. It certainly indicates that Dryden felt that the creative fire was failing in him for the time at least. In the next lines of the prologue<sup>43</sup> he points out, continuing the figure, that the audience is like a wife who takes new lovers (that is, sees plays by different authors) night after night, preferring new ones, not because they are better than her husband (Dryden), but because they have variety: "One gets you wits, another gets you fools." In his play, apparently, Dryden attempted to compete with such "paramours" by furnishing such variety.<sup>44</sup>

No one would expect a great work of art to be born from such a practice, but it is not altogether surprising that *The Mock Astrologer* pleased the audience for whom it was put together. Pepys reports that "the world" commended the play,<sup>45</sup> and it appears to have been revived at least twice after its first run.<sup>46</sup> Pepys, however, considered *The Mock Astrologer* "nothing so good as *The Maiden Queen*,"<sup>47</sup> and Evelyn, who saw it on the day before Pepys, says that it had "a foolish plot."<sup>48</sup> Pepys was "troubled" at how much popular opin-

<sup>43</sup> The rest of the prologue is even more indecent, though the way in which Dryden has carried out the figure to the end must be admitted to be masterly.

<sup>44</sup> In the epilogue to *The Mock Astrologer* Dryden represents the critics as saying of him that —

". . . betwixt a French and English plot,  
He eased his half-tired muse, on pace and trot,"

but defends himself by pointing out how much work he had to do and explaining that —

"He still must write, and, banquier like, each day  
Accept new hills, and he must break, or pay"

<sup>45</sup> *Diary*, June 20, 1668

<sup>46</sup> Downes (*Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 39) says that it was revived soon after the two theaters combined in 1682. Nicoll (*op cit*, pp. 312 and 313) prints warrants to show that the king and queen saw the play on February 16, 1684/5, and on October 13, 1686

<sup>47</sup> *Op cit*, June 20, 1668

<sup>48</sup> In his *Diary* Evelyn calls it *The Evening Lover*, thinking of the other title of the play, *An Evening's Love*. It is interesting to observe that Evelyn

ion was at variance with his own,<sup>49</sup> and was apparently relieved when Herringman, Dryden's publisher, told him that "Dryden [did] himself call it but a fifth-rate play."<sup>50</sup>

Though the modern reader is more apt to agree with Pepys and Evelyn and with Dryden himself, as quoted by Herringman, than with the popular voice as to the worth of the comedy as a whole, parts of it must be admitted to be in Dryden's brightest style. When Wildblood and Jacintha are at their best they mark a decided advancement beyond Loveby and Lady Constance, and even beyond Celadon and Florimel, in the development of those witty lovers which were Dryden's chief contribution to Restoration comedy.<sup>51</sup> The second meeting of Wildblood and Jacintha<sup>52</sup> is a good illustration of this:

*Wildblood:* Faith, we live in a good honest country, where we are content with our old vices: partly because we want wit to invent more new. A colony of Spaniards, or spiritual Italians, planted among us, would make us much more racy. 'Tis true, our variety is not much, but, to speak nobly of our way of living, 'tis like that of the sun, which rises, and looks upon the same thing he saw yesterday, and goes to bed again. . . .

*Jacintha:* But what need we go into another climate? as our love was born here, so let it live and die here, and be honestly buried in its native country.

*Wildblood:* Faith, agreed with all my heart. For I am none of those unreasonable lovers, that propose to themselves the loving to eternity. The truth is, a month is commonly my stint; but in that month, I love so dreadfully, that it is after a twelve-month's rate of common love.

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is elsewhere careless in remembering the titles of Dryden's plays. Under March 14, 1667, he calls *The Maiden Queen* "The Virgin Queen."

<sup>49</sup> *Op cit*, June 20, 1668.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, June 22, 1668.

<sup>51</sup> Downes (*op cit*, p. 16) gives Wildblood as one of the player Hart's most popular rôles. Nell Gwyn took the part of Jacintha.

<sup>52</sup> *The Mock Astrologer*, II, 1.

*Jacintha*: Or, would not a fortnight serve our turn? for, in troth, a month looks somewhat dismally, 'tis a whole Egyptian year. If a moon changes in my love, I shall think my Cupid grown dull, or fallen into apoplexy.

A few lines farther on Wildblood sings the graceful song beginning with the lines,

You charmed me not with that fair face,  
Though it was all divine:

And *Jacintha* continues:

*Jacintha*: Believe it, cavalier, you are a dangerous person: Do you hold forth your gifts, in hopes to make me love you less?

*Wildblood*: They would signify little, if we were once married:  
! Those gaities are all nipt and frost-bitten in the marriage-bed, i' faith.

*Jacintha*: I am sorry to hear 'tis so cold a place: But 'tis all one to us, who do not mean to trouble it. The truth is, your humour pleases me exceedingly: how long it will do so, I know not; but so long as it does, I am resolved to give myself the content of seeing you. For, if I should once constrain myself, I might fall in love in good earnest: But I have stayed too long with you, and would be loath to surfeit you at first.<sup>53</sup>

As is usual in Dryden's combats of wit, the lady outdoes the gallant; *Jacintha* shows more initiative in carrying on the affair than does *Wildblood*. In the last scene of the comedy this initiative of hers is particularly striking. When *Alonzo* threatens to put his daughters into a nunnery, she cries:

I would have thee to know, thou graceless old man, that I defy a nunnery. Name a nunnery once more, and I disown thee for my father.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> *Wildblood's* speech about marriage in Act I, Scene 1, should also be cited "Marriage, quotha! What, dost thou think I have been bred in the deserts of Africa, or among the savages of America? Nay, if I had, I must needs have known better things than so; the light of nature would not have let me go so far astray."

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, V, 1.

And when Alonzo proposes that the marriages be put off until after Lent, which is to begin on the next day, she cries:

If I stay till after Lent, I shall be to marry when I have no love left: I'll not bate you an ace of tonight, father, I mean to bury this man ere Lent be done, and get me another before Easter.<sup>55</sup>

Alonzo assents weakly, "Well, make a night on't then."<sup>56</sup>

The *élan* with which Wildblood and Jacintha are presented indicates that Dryden enjoyed writing their dialogue more than the rest of the play, and this leads one to suspect that, had he written merely to please himself, he might have produced more plays in which such characters predominate. It has been shown that, when these lovers next appeared in *Marriage à la Mode*, they indicated again, by not having a source, that Dryden had made them his own. They are certainly his greatest contribution to the comedy of manners, and in spite of the fact that, when they first appeared as Celadon and Florimel in *The Maiden Queen*, their wit was suggested by Mlle de Scudéry—as was shown in Chapter III—in their later appearances they have far surpassed their prototypes in *Le Grand Cyrus*.

<sup>55</sup> *The Mock Astrologer*, V, 1

<sup>56</sup> Shadwell's quarrel with Dryden about the morality of Dryden's witty lovers in which Shadwell called Celadon (apparently, at least, he was speaking of Dryden's characters) "a Swearing, Drinking, Whoring Ruffian" and Florimel "an impudent ill-bred *tomrig*" has been often mentioned, but no one, I think, has pointed to Shadwell's indirect ridicule of the wits of *The Mock Astrologer*, which consisted in his naming two foolish would-be's of *The Woman Captain* (1679), Bellamy and Wildman. These two characters win out in their courtship, as do Dryden's two wits, but find after their marriage that their wives are prostitutes in disguise.

Shadwell had more reason for objecting to Wildblood than to Celadon, for Wildblood is probably, with the exception of Woodall of *Mr Limberham*, the most immodest of Dryden's heroes. When he first meets Jacintha in church, he says (*The Mock Astrologer*, I, 2) "I beseech you, madam, trouble not yourself for my religion, for, though I am a heretic to the men of your country, to your ladies I am a very zealous Catholic, and for fornication and adultery, I assure you I hold with both churches."

The scenes in Act III, in which Jacintha tests Wildblood's constancy for her by disguising herself as another person and tempting him to make love to her, are much less effective than the passages quoted. Here the wit consists in situation rather than in repartee. In using this situation Dryden had abundant precedent in the fashionable comedies of the past years. The same thing had been done in *She Wou'd If She Cou'd* and in *The Mulberry-Garden*. As he did so often, Dryden has given us twice as much of what he imitated as he found in his predecessors; that is, Jacintha disguises herself twice, once as a Moorish girl and once as a mulatto servant, and Wildblood succumbs to her on both occasions, but she forgives him for his willingness to be unfaithful — as the convention demanded.

Aurelia is an interesting character, too, since she shows the beginnings of the affectation which was to appear later in Melantha of *Marriage à la Mode*. Aurelia's first speech was taken from *Les Précieuses ridicules*, but after that she does not follow Molière's young ladies,<sup>57</sup> her pretense consists chiefly in the excessive use of the adverb "furiously," just as Melantha's later consists in the repetition of the tag "Let me die." The beginnings of Melantha's affectation of French phrases is seen in Aurelia too, when she says ". . . that sigh . . . I think, is not altogether disagreeable; but something *charmante* and *mignonne*."<sup>58</sup>

In the foregoing pages I have pointed out that the limitations of *The Mock Astrologer* are caused by the fact that Dryden, tired of dramatic work and disillusioned as to the value of trying to do more than please, gave the public a little of each kind of thing that it had applauded during recent years, not even taking the trouble to combine carefully what

<sup>57</sup> See p 159

<sup>58</sup> *The Mock Astrologer*, V, 1.

he borrowed from his various sources. One part of the mixture, however, consisted of original scenes in which his familiar witty couple exhibited their skill at repartee, and I have tried to show by quotations that in this he was up to his usual standard — in fact, that he showed an advance over *The Maiden Queen* which prepares us for the brilliance of *Marriage à la Mode*. This repartee does not make *The Mock Astrologer* one of his best comedies, however, for the other elements of the play do not blend, it seems to me, with these scenes or with one another.

## II

When *The Assignment*, the comedy which followed *Marriage à la Mode*, failed in or about November, 1672,<sup>59</sup> Dryden received the first setback which he had had for a long time. His last comedies, *The Mock Astrologer* and *Marriage à la Mode*, had been amazingly successful; his adaptation of Molière, *Sir Martin Mar-all*, had scored an even bigger hit; and his heroic plays, particularly *The Conquest of Granada*, had announced the complete formulation of a new genre of drama. Even the satire of Buckingham's *Rehearsal* had not been able to prevent his continued success.

But the failure of *The Assignment* seems to have depressed Dryden considerably. After it nearly six years passed without the appearance of a single comedy from his pen, and when the next one did appear — *Mr. Limberham* in 1678 — it was written in a new style and apparently intended to please an audience different from that for which most of his earlier comedies had been produced.<sup>60</sup>

In his dedication to Sedley Dryden gives three possible rea-

<sup>59</sup> Nicoll, *A History of Restoration Drama*, p. 359, gives this date.

<sup>60</sup> See the discussion of *Mr. Limberham*, pp. 191-199

sons for the failure of *The Assignment*. The fault lay, he says, either "in the play itself, or in the lameness of the action, or in the number of its enemies, who came resolved to damn it for the title."<sup>61</sup> It is impossible for us today to judge in regard to the last two reasons. Dryden's finding fault with the actors<sup>62</sup> might very well be the result of a natural desire to lay the blame for failure on somebody other than himself, and there seems to be no reason why more people should have taken a prejudiced dislike to *Love in a Nunnery*<sup>63</sup> for religious reasons than took exception to *The Spanish Friar*, one of his greatest successes. The other reason suggested, that the fault lay in the play itself, may be better judged after the play has been classified and its sources have been discussed.

The difficulty that one finds in classifying *The Assignment* suggests at once one of the causes of its failure. Like *The Mock Astrologer*, it has several different elements, which were not well combined. The parts of scenes in which the valet Benito exhibits his Molièresque folly are poorly grafted upon passages in which Dryden attempted to have Camillo, Violetta, Aurelian, and Laura imitate the combats of wit of his earlier couples. Prince Frederick and Lucretia talk part of the time like Celadon and Florimel, part of the time like characters in a heroic play. This characteristic will be illustrated later.

It seems likely that Dryden started out to make *The Assignment* a tragicomedy like *The Maiden Queen* and *Marriage à la Mode*. The plot in which the Duke of Mantua, his son Frederick, and Lucretia appear was probably intended to be serious, with important heroic elements, and the plot involving the two other pairs of lovers, Camillo and Violetta and Aurelian and Laura, was to have been the comic one.

<sup>61</sup> Dedication to *The Assignment*, *Works*, IV, 370.

<sup>62</sup> "The lameness of the action" apparently refers to the work of the actors.

<sup>63</sup> The second title of *The Assignment*



The two plots are certainly as separate as those in Dryden's two-plot tragicomedies, and they have large elements of the kind indicated.

Much of the portion of the drama which has to do with the Duke, his son, and Lucretia, for instance, is in blank verse and is cast into a heroic mold in a way which suggests that it was originally intended to be altogether serious and to correspond to the serious plots of the other tragicomedies. In Act V, Scene 4, the situation, the heroic nature of which is derived from its source,<sup>64</sup> is handled in a heroic manner. Prince Frederick, having been banished by his father because he and his father both love Lucretia, rebels, but, as he prepares to have his father seized, his better nature gets the upper hand, and he kneels before the Duke:

*Frederick:*

. . . reason now has reassumed its place,  
And makes me see how black a crime it is  
To use a force upon my prince and father.

*Duke:*

You give me hope you will resign Lucretia.

*Frederick:*

Ah no, I never can resign her to you.  
But, sir, I can my life, which, on my knees,  
I tender, as the atoning sacrifice.  
Or if your hand (because you are a father)  
Be loth to take away that life you gave,  
I will redeem your crime, by making it  
My own: So you shall still be innocent, and I  
Die blessed, and unindebted for my being.

*Duke:*

O Frederick, you are too much a son,  
(*Embracing him*)  
And I too little am a father you,  
And you alone, have merited Lucretia;

<sup>64</sup> See p. 181, n. 89.

'Tis now my only grief,  
I can do nothing to requite this virtue:  
For to restore her to you,  
Is not an act of generosity,  
But a scant, niggard justice; yet I love her  
So much, that even this little, which I do,  
Is like the bounty of a usurer;  
High to be priz'd from me,  
Because 'tis drawn from such a wretched mind.

*Frederick:*

You give me now a second, better life;  
(*Kissing his hand*)

The nature of the conflict, the exaggeration of the sentiments expressed and the sudden change in the Duke's attitude toward his son are all, I think it will be agreed, in the heroic manner.<sup>65</sup>

As the plot just discussed is like the serious portions of the tragicomedies, so the other plot of *The Assignment* is in the vein of the comic portions of those plays. Parts of it sound very much like what Dryden had written in the comic scenes of *The Maiden Queen* and *Marriage à la Mode*. The third scene of Act II, in which Aurelian and Laura meet in the dark garden, each disguised as a servant, is a good example of this:

*Aurelian: (Stepping towards Laura)* Damsel of darkness, advance, and meet my flames!

*Laura: (Stepping forward)* Right trusty valet, heard, but yet unseen, I have advanced one step on reputation.

*Aurelian:* Now, by laudable custom, I am to love thee vehemently

*Laura:* We should do well to see each other first: You know 'tis ill taking money without light.

*Aurelian:* O, but the coin of love is known by the weight only,

<sup>65</sup> In fact, the situation is exactly the same as the one which Dryden used later in his heroic play *Aureng-Zebe*. In it the emperor and his son Aureng-Zebe both love the princess Indamora.

and you may feel it in the dark: Besides, you know 'tis princelike to love without seeing.

*Laura*: But then you may be served as princes are sometimes.

*Aurelian*: Let us make haste, however, and despatch a little love out of the way: We may do it now with ease, and save ourselves a great deal of trouble, if we take it in time, before it grows too fast upon our hands.

*Laura*: Fie, no; let us love discreetly: we must manage our passion, and not love all our love out at one meeting, but leave some for another time.

*Aurelian*: I am for applying the plaster whilst the wound is green; 'twill heal the better.

If the spirit of each of these examples were continued throughout the plot in which it occurs, *The Assignation* would be another tragicomedy of two contrasting plots,<sup>88</sup> but Dryden did not so continue it. In the heroic part there are bits of witty repartee, and in the comic part romantic passages, so that, when the farcical bits in which the valet Benito appears are also considered, the play seems to be an indiscriminate collocation of unrelated elements.

To illustrate, the plot in which the Duke, his son Frederick, and Lucretia appear, the plot which has been shown to be largely heroic, has also in it witty passages like the following, in which Prince Frederick and Lucretia, a novice in the nunnery, pretend to have contempt for love:

*Lucretia*: . . . let us vow solemnly these two things: the first, to esteem each other better than we do all the world besides; the next, never to change our amity to love.

*Frederick*: Agreed, madam. Shall I kiss your hand on it?

<sup>88</sup> The slender connection between the two plots of *The Assignation* is similar to that of the tragicomedies *Camillo* and *Aurelian* are asked by Prince Frederick to assist him in taking Lucretia from his father (V, 3) and are waiting just outside to aid him when he enters to the Duke (V, 4).

*Lucretia*: That is too like a lover; or, if it were not, the narrowness of the grate will excuse the ceremony.

*Hippolita (a nun)*: No, but it will not, to my knowledge: I have tried every bar many a fair time over; and at last have found out one, where a hand may get through, and be gallanted.

*Lucretia (giving her hand)*: There, sir, 'tis a true one.

*Frederick (kissing it)*: This, then, is a seal to our perpetual friendship, and defiance to all love.

*Lucretia*. That seducer of virtue.

*Frederick*: That disturber of quiet.

*Lucretia*: That madness of youth.

*Frederick*: That dotage of old age.

*Lucretia*: That enemy to good humour.

*Frederick*. And, to conclude all, that reason of all unreasonable actions.

*Ascanio (the prince's page)*: This doctrine is abominable; do not believe it, sister.

*Hippolita*: No, if I do, brother, may I never have comfort from sweet youth at my extremity.

*Lucretia*: But remember one article of our friendship, that though we banish love, we do not mirth, nor gallantry; for I declare, I am for all extravagancies, but just loving.

*Frederick*: Just my own humour; for I hate gravity and melancholy next to love.<sup>67</sup>

It is obvious, of course, that Frederick and Lucretia, "heroic" though they be elsewhere, are in love in the Restoration manner and that they will marry, as they do at the end, railing all the while against marriage.

Certain parts of the comic plot are no less at variance with surrounding material than was the passage just quoted at variance with the serious part of the drama in which it is

<sup>67</sup> *The Assignment*, III, 1.

found. For instance, Camillo and Violetta, two of the witty lovers, speak once in the following romantic vein:

*Violetta:*

You feed a wolf within you.

*Camillo:*

Then feast my love with a more solid diet.  
He makes us now a miser's feast, and we  
Forbear to take our fill. The silent night,  
And all these downy hours, were made for lovers:  
Gently they tread, and softly measure time,  
That no rude noise may fright the tender maid,  
From giving all her soul to melting joys.

*Violetta:*

You do not love me, if you did, you would not  
Thus urge your satisfaction in my shame;  
At best, I see you would not love me long,  
For they, who plunder, do not mean to stay.

*Camillo:*

I haste to take possession of my own.

*Violetta:*

Ere heaven and holy vows have made it so?

*Camillo:*

Then witness, heaven, and all these twinkling stars — <sup>68</sup>

It will be admitted at once that this quotation is far from the manners vein of the rest of the plot.

Benito, Aurelian's Molièresque servant, though he is undoubtedly comic, is also out of place in this plot. The farcical, *commedia dell' arte* atmosphere of those portions of the play in which he predominates is not in keeping with the atmosphere of the comedy of manners in surrounding scenes.

This lack of homogeneity in *The Assignation* does not have

<sup>68</sup> *The Assignation*, II, 3. It is interesting to compare the last five lines of Camillo's first speech quoted above with lines 324-327 of Spenser's *Epithalamion*.

the same causes as have the contradictions in atmosphere and character in *The Mock Astrologer*. In the earlier-written play the trouble was caused by a failure to bring discordant sources into conformity with one another. Here, however, Dryden played an active rather than a passive part in producing the disharmony, for the discordant parts of both plots are original with him.<sup>69</sup> He added them to what he borrowed.<sup>70</sup> This fact will be further illustrated in the following discussion of the sources of the drama.

The sources of *The Assignment* cannot be examined without another reference to Scott and Saintsbury and their undocumented insistence on Dryden's originality. Scott says:

Langbaine . . . labours to show, that the characters [of *The Assignment*] are imitated from the "Roman Comique" of Scarron, and other novels of the time. But Langbaine seems to have been unable to comprehend, that originality consists in the mode of treating a subject more than in the subject itself.<sup>71</sup>

Saintsbury agrees emphatically with Sir Walter.<sup>72</sup>

Dryden's editors have been very misleading here; for while they are right in their attitude toward Dryden's debt to Scarron's *Roman comique*,<sup>73</sup> they are wrong about what he owes to the "other novels" (which they apparently do not consider important enough even to name). Dryden's debt to *The Annals of Love*, one of the other novels that Langbaine mentions,<sup>74</sup> is considerable.<sup>75</sup> Let us compare, for instance, one of

<sup>69</sup> Unless, of course, the discordant parts of the plots are based on sources as yet undiscovered

<sup>70</sup> Benito is not altogether original. See pp 187-190

<sup>71</sup> *Works*, IV, 368.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>73</sup> See p 184

<sup>74</sup> Langbaine says (*op. cit.*, p 155) "The characters of the Duke of Mantua, Prince Frederick & Lucretia, are borrow'd from *The Annals of Love*, 8° in the story of Constance the fair Nun, pag 81" The complete title is *The Annals of Love, Containing Select histories of the Amours of Divers Princes Courts, Pleasantly Related* It was anonymous and appeared in 1672

<sup>75</sup> Since this chapter was written Montague Summers has observed (*op. cit.*,

the scenes of the more serious plot of Dryden's play with the story of Constance the fair nun in *The Annals of Love*. The Duke has just discovered that the disguised lady who talked with him at a *mascarade* and then disappeared is the novice Lucretia and that she is breaking the rules of her apprenticeship by carrying on a flirtation with the prince, his own son. He calls on her, therefore, armed with a letter from her to his son which he has found. His purpose is blackmail:

*The Assignment*, IV, 3  
*Duke*:  
This will not do; your voice,  
your mien, your stature,  
Betray you for the same I saw  
last night.  
You know the time and place.

*Lucretia*:  
You were not in this chapel,  
And I am bound by vow to stir  
no further.

*Duke*:  
But you had too much wit to  
keep that vow.

*Lucretia*:  
If you persist, sir, in this raving  
madness,  
I can bring witness of my innocence. (*Is going*)

*Duke*:  
To save that labour, see if you  
know that hand, and let that

*The Annals of Love*  
(pp. 96-98)<sup>76</sup>  
... he told her bluntly at  
once what he understood of  
her affairs.

She ... believed that it was  
enough ... if she swore  
stoutly there had been no such  
thing.

... but *Frederick*, having  
wherewithal to convince her by

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III, 269) that Dryden owes a debt to *The Annals of Love*, and has given an outline of the plot of the novel, but he has not shown what part of this Dryden took or how he used it

<sup>76</sup> Page 98 is misnumbered 88.

justify you. (*Shows her letter*)

his own eyes, he shew her the Letter.

*Lucretia:*

What do I see! my ruin is inevitable.

*Duke:*

You know you merit it . . .

*Lucretia:*

But you, I hope, are much too noble to  
Destroy the fame of a poor silly woman?

This Menace made poor *Constance* to tremble, she betook her self to her whimpering, and her tears and beseeched the Emperor that he would not ruine a Person of so Illustrious Extraction, whose Reputation was entirely in his hands.

*Duke:*

Then in a few words, — for I am bred a soldier,  
And must speak plain, — it is your love I ask;  
If you deny, this letter is produced,  
You know the consequence.

He . . . swore as heartily as she, he would shew it [the letter] his Holiness, if she did not oblige him to the contrary by an ingenuous confession.

*Lucretia:*

I hope I do not;  
For though there are appearances against me,  
Enough to give you hope I durst not shun you,  
Yet, could you see my heart, 'tis a white virgin-tablet,  
On which no characters of earthly love  
Were ever writ: And twixt the prince and me,

[She said] That it was true indeed her Curiosity had been indiscreet but

that at the bottom it was innocent, and that as to her Intrigue and Correspondence with his Son, it was the common Entertainment of young people, and had no other end



If there were any criminal affection,  
May heaven this minute —

*Duke:*

Swear not; I believe you:

For, could I think my son had  
e'er enjoyed you,  
I should not be his rival. Since  
he has not,  
I may have so much kindness  
for myself,  
To wish that happiness.

but the diversion of their  
minds, and a harmless affecta-  
tion of making innocent Love.

He was too cunning to testify  
the suspicion of a Crime, which  
would have put an invincible  
obstruction upon all designs.  
. . . Had you consummated  
your Intrigues with my Son,  
Madam, said the Emperour, I  
would die a thousand deaths  
before I would propose any-  
thing of that nature for my-  
self. . . . But, Madam, the  
Amours and Gallantry betwixt  
you two having been so inno-  
cent, it cannot hinder you at  
all from granting me some fa-  
vourable indulgence.

*Lucretia:*

You ask me what I must not  
grant,  
Nor, if I loved you, would: you  
know my vow of chastity.

. . . to satisfy him, was to  
transgress the Laws, both hu-  
mane and Divine.

I have quoted these parallel passages in order to prove at once that Dryden's editors were wrong in claiming that even when he did use a literary source he changed it so much that it ceased to be important in the study of his plays. By these passages I have shown that he did use the story of Constance the fair nun in such a way as to make it important. He did not follow his source so closely everywhere, but there are several parts of scenes equally effective for illustration.

Moreover, in every important feature of the more serious plot of *The Assignment* Dryden follows the story of Constance. There is little told about Constance in *The Annals of*

*Love* that Dryden did not use in his character Lucretia. Constance is a model for Lucretia in being a novice instead of a nun. She is a niece to the Pope,<sup>77</sup> as is Lucretia.<sup>78</sup> She is wooed by the Emperor's son,<sup>79</sup> just as Lucretia is wooed by the Duke's son.<sup>80</sup> She steals from the nunnery to go to a masquerade with her young lover,<sup>81</sup> but is embarrassed by becoming the object of the Emperor's gallantry,<sup>82</sup> as is Lucretia.<sup>83</sup> When she returns to the nunnery she finds that she has lost her key, but after a bad fright, finds it again,<sup>84</sup> as does Lucretia.<sup>85</sup> The prince, Constance's lover, drops a letter which she has sent to him, and it is found by the Emperor,<sup>86</sup> just as Frederick drops Lucretia's letter, which is then found by the Duke in the play.<sup>87</sup> That the Emperor's using the letter to blackmail Constance is the source for the same thing in the play has already been shown by the parallel passages quoted.

Finally, Constance decides to recover the letter from the Emperor by a ruse; so she makes an assignation with him in the garden of the nunnery,<sup>88</sup> just as Lucretia does.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>77</sup> *The Annals of Love*, p. 81.

<sup>78</sup> *The Assignation*, II, 1.

<sup>79</sup> *The Annals of Love*, p. 83.

<sup>80</sup> *The Assignation*, II, 1.

<sup>81</sup> *The Annals of Love*, p. 86. *The Assignation*, III, 1.

<sup>82</sup> *The Annals of Love*, pp. 86-87.

<sup>83</sup> *The Assignation*, III, 2.

<sup>84</sup> *The Annals of Love*, pp. 88-89.

<sup>85</sup> *The Assignation*, III, 3.

<sup>86</sup> *The Annals of Love*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>87</sup> *The Assignation*, IV, 1.

<sup>88</sup> *The Annals of Love*, pp. 100-101.

<sup>89</sup> *The Assignation*, V, 4. It is from this assignation, apparently, that the comedy gets its name, though there are so many of them that one cannot be sure. This scene is particularly close to its source, as parallel passages from the play and the novel show.

*The Assignation*, V, 4.

*The Annals of Love*, pp. 100-102.

"*Lucretia*

. . . To meet you single, shows I  
trust your virtue;

"She fell into a large Encomium of  
his confidence, told him that that was

The play separates from the novel at the end. In the novel the young prince, supported by his uncle the Pope, revolts against his father who has banished him, and forces the old man to allow him to marry Constance.<sup>90</sup> In the play the young

But you appear distrustful of my love.

the surest way to win her heart." (p. 100)

"Duke"

You wrong me much, I am not.

"Lucretia"

Excuse me, sir, you keep a curb upon me;

"... she conjured him to return her the Letter, and to chuse rather to receive her favours from her own pure will, than to owe them to any fear or constraint. . . ." (p. 100)

You awe me with a letter, which you hold

As hostage of my love; and hostages Are ne'er required but from suspected faith."

After hesitating for a long time, the Duke finally gives in.

"Duke"

You shall [love me], and this shall be the seal of my affection — (*Gives the letter*) . . .

"He pulled the Letter out of his Pocket, and gave it into her hands,

(*Lucretia runs*)

but he was much surprised to see her run away with the Paper." (p. 101)

"Lucretia"

Help, help, or I am ravished! help, for heaven's sake!

"She said she had been drawn by force out of her Cell, and carried into the Garden, whence they had certainly conveyed her through the breach of the wall, had not the Cryes of her Companions (who heard her skreek [*sic*] out) prevented their violence." (p. 102)

"Hippolita, Laura and Violetta"

Help, help Lucretia! they bear away Lucretia by force

"Duke."

I think there's a devil in every corner.

(*Enter Valerio*)

"Valerio"

Sir, the design was laid on purpose for you, and all the women placed to cry.

Make haste away; avoid the shame, for heaven's sake

"Duke (*Going*)"

O, I could fire this monastery."

"... they perswaded him so forcibly, that it was not safe for him to stay longer in the Garden, that he retired with all speed . . . so mad and outrageous at the Trick they had put upon him, that had he followed the first motions of his Choler, he would have set fire to the Monastery. . . ." (p. 101)

<sup>90</sup> *The Annals of Love*, pp. 104-105.

prince starts to show his discontent at his banishment in the same way, that is, by preparing to revolt, but changes his mind, offers his own life to his father, and thereby softens the old man's heart so that he willingly gives him the hand of Lucretia.<sup>91</sup>

From this digest it will be seen that the heroic plot which gave the name to the drama was drawn largely from *The Annals of Love* and that Dryden did not make many important changes in what he took, since the story already had the heroic spirit he apparently wanted. As has been said, however, he did make certain minor additions to this plot, and these are out of harmony with the rest. The witty dialogue between the prince and Lucretia in Act III, Scene 1, has already been quoted. The scene which Langbaine thought ridiculous, presumably because it does not fit in with the surrounding plot, is another example. It is Scene 1 of Act IV, the scene in which the prince pretends to have a "belly ache" in order to be allowed to sit in his father's presence and thus hide the masking habits which Lucretia has worn to the masquerade.<sup>92</sup> The witty raillery between the prince and Lucretia in Act IV, Scene 4, which sounds odd, coming as it does from heroic characters, is also apparently Dryden's addition.

The inclusion of the "comic" plot in the play was possibly first suggested to Dryden by the statement in *The Annals of Love* that, when the young prince Henry fell in love with Constance, he "selected such of the young Cavaliers of his Train as were best affected to his interest" and gave them in charge

<sup>91</sup> *The Assiguation*, V. 4. Part of this scene is quoted on page 172.

<sup>92</sup> Langbaine blames Dryden particularly for the unheroic nature of this scene, apparently because it was Dryden's own addition to the borrowed plot. Langbaine says (*op cit*, p. 155) "But as to the Scene of the *Petticoat* and *Belly Ache*, so much commended by Mr Bayes [i.e. ridiculed in *The Rehearsal*, Act III], I believe 'twas Mr. Dryden's own Contrivance."

to court the other nuns.<sup>93</sup> This suggestion apparently resulted not only in the creation of Ascanio and in the contrivance of his courtship of Hippolito (which is merely comic relief for the serious plot), but in the addition of the two pairs of lovers, Camillo and Violetta and Aurelian and Laura.<sup>94</sup>

If Dryden had been willing to give as much of his time and genius to the perfecting of these characters as he had given to his earlier witty couples, *The Assignment* might very well have been as successful a play as any, in spite of the irregularities of the heroic plot. But the quartette are not well done. Aside from the fact already noted that they lapse at times into romantic dialogue, they fail ever to achieve any really sparkling raillery. It seems likely, as Nicoll suggests, that this explains why the play did not please the Restoration audience.<sup>95</sup>

Langbaine says: "The Characters of *Aurelian*, *Camillo*, *Laura*, and *Violetta* are taken from *Scarron's Comical Romance* in the History of *Destiny* and *Madam Star*: See Ch. 13. pag. 43." As observed above, this is one of Langbaine's great-

<sup>93</sup> *The Annals of Love*, pp. 83-84.

<sup>94</sup> These Cavaliers are not forgotten in *The Annals of Love*. We are told at the end of the story (p. 105) that when Prince Henry married Constance "he proposed to the three persons (who were Gallants to *Constance's* three Confidants) to follow his Example. They had made Love as furiously as he, he promised them considerable advantages, and the Pope was in so good an humour at that time, he would have given Dispensations to the whole Covent [*sic*], if his Niece had desired it." These gallants, however, lived up to the philosophy of Restoration wit: better than did comedy of manners gallants, for "They told him they could not but fear the Laws of Wedlock might be as easily violated, as the Rules of a Covent. That in so tender a point one could not be too cautious, and that if the worst happened that could be, and they must marry, they desired to do it upon his terms, and have an equivalence to the Empire of the West, for their Wives Portion" (*ibid.*, pp. 105-106).

<sup>95</sup> Nicoll, *A History of Restoration Drama*, p. 218. Nicoll here says that *The Assignment* failed "possibly because of the lack in them of the graceless couples which had dominated the early plays. . . . In *The Assignment* Dryden obviously tried to repeat *Celadon* and *Florimel*. . . but he has failed to give them the life which animated his first creations."

<sup>96</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 155.

est exaggerations. Dryden's characters are not Scarron's. Dryden did take from Scarron one of the situations of the plot in which Aurelian, Camillo, Laura, and Violetta move, but that is all. This slight borrowing is, however, important enough to be discussed here.

In *Le Roman comique* of Scarron<sup>97</sup> Destin tells how Verville, wishing to meet his mistress secretly in her garden, takes him (Destin) along. Destin is disguised as the other's valet, so that he may entertain the maid while Verville is carrying on his courtship with the mistress, Mlle de Saldagne. It is necessary for them to be secret, since the lady has a brother who is as jealous of her as if he were her husband. When Destin meets Mlle de Saldagne's maid, however, he finds her a woman of wit; she does not gossip about her mistress or talk in the least like a servant, and she insists that he does not speak like a valet. He feels sure, however, that she would look very ugly if there were light enough for him to see her.<sup>98</sup> As we learn later, the supposed maidservant is no more a servant than he is a valet; she is Mlle de Saldagne's elder sister, Mlle de Léry.<sup>99</sup>

The general idea for Act II, Scene 3, of *The Assignment* was taken from this plot. In it Camillo and Violetta meet — secretly because of the latter's jealous uncle. Aurelian acts as Camillo's valet and exchanges repartee in the dark with one who is supposed to be a maidservant, but who is really Laura in disguise. Aurelian is surprised, like Destin, at her wit, but feels, like him, that she must be very ugly. It should be noted that all four characters in this scene of Dryden's had appeared before this in scenes which have no connection with Scarron's story, and that, what is more important, the wit of Dryden's two pretended servants owes nothing to the wit of Scarron's

<sup>97</sup> *Œuvres de Scarron*, Tome II, p. 100

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103

<sup>99</sup> Why the sisters have different names is difficult to discover

two.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, the conversation between Camillo and Violetta in this scene—which, as I have observed, is romantic, not witty—is not modeled on Scarron either; Scarron did not even tell us what Verville and Mlle de Saldagne said to each other. It seems certain, however, that Dryden did get the idea for the situation from Scarron.

Scarron also gave Dryden the idea of having Laura see Camillo's *real* valet, Benito, later by daylight and be surprised at his lack of wit.<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, when on a third occasion she meets Aurelian, again disguised with the help of darkness as the valet, finds that he is again witty, and says: "I think your wit comes to you, as the sight of owls does, only in the dark,"<sup>102</sup> her words are like those of Scarron's Destin who had observed that Mlle de Léry "ne pouvait comprendre pourquoi j'avois plus d'esprit la nuit que le jour."<sup>103</sup>

From here on, and, as I have explained, in the part of the story antecedent to these scenes, the story and the play are entirely different. Destin did not continue his courtship of the "maidservant," as did Aurelian, even when he found out who she was, for he had been in love all along with a certain Léonore, and Mlle de Léry married Verville's brother, Saint-Far.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>100</sup> The quotation from this part of the play which was made above (p. 173) illustrates the kind of witty dialogue Dryden wrote for the situation he borrowed.

<sup>101</sup> Scarron, *op cit.*, p. 104, *The Assignment*, III, 1.

<sup>102</sup> *The Assignment*, IV, 5.

<sup>103</sup> Scarron, *op cit.*, p. 105.

<sup>104</sup> Langbaine has not given quite the correct reference to Scarron. The story of Destiny and Madame Star (*Destin et l'Étoile*), Chapter 13, which he refers to, has to do with Destin's courtship of l'Étoile. Chapter 15, from which Dryden really borrowed, is, as has been shown, about Destin and Mlle de Léry, not about Destin and l'Étoile.

Saintsbury comments (*Works*, IV, 368) on Langbaine's reference to Scarron as follows:

"Scott's sentence on Langbaine [Scott has said that Langbaine seemed to have been unable to comprehend that originality consists in the mode of

The rest of the plot in which Camillo, Violetta, Aurelian, and Laura move apparently had no definite source.

One character in it, Aurelian's foolish servant, was, however, not completely original. In spite of the fact that his farce does not harmonize with the manners plot in which he moves, Dryden had several reasons for putting Benito into the play. In the first place, he had found by the success of *Sir Martin Mar-all* that the farce furnished by Molièresque fools could please his audiences.<sup>105</sup> In the second place, he had noticed the hit made by Edward Ravenscroft's adaptation of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* — *Mamamouchi, or The Citizen Turned Gentleman*, which also naturally contained plenty of Molièresque farce.<sup>106</sup> In fact, when in the prologue to *The Assignment* Benito explains his own existence, he mentions

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treating a subject more than in the subject itself] is just and final, and must excuse me from noticing the idle and uncritical attempts of criticsasters to indicate this and that source for the incidents of this and other plays. As however they may interest some readers, they will be inserted in the Appendix. The charge of plagiarism, as far as the *Roman Comique* is concerned, is simply preposterous"

This declaration indicates, I think, Saintsbury's limitations as an editor. He is certainly not fulfilling his duties when he refuses to examine *all* suggested sources just because *one* appears to be of minor importance. The appendix was one of the many that Saintsbury promised but never produced. His smug inaction as an editor is irritating, even after fifty years. He says nothing at all of *The Annals of Love* and its standing as a source of *The Assignment*.

It might be observed that, while Saintsbury's claim that Dryden did not owe a debt to Scarron is substantially correct, it is possible that Saintsbury did no more than look up Langbaine's *incorrect* reference. Had he done more he might not have used such strong language in referring to the charge of plagiarism as "simply preposterous."

Summers (*op cit*, III, 272) seems to be echoing Saintsbury when he calls Langbaine's claim that Dryden used Scarron "gratuitously absurd."

<sup>105</sup> As was noted in the first part of this chapter, Maskall of *The Mock Astrologer* was also an attempt to please the same taste that had responded to the Molière adaptation, *Sancho of Love Triumphant* was another. Hartmann (*op cit*, p. 10) points this out.

<sup>106</sup> Ravenscroft's adaptation contains scenes inspired by Molière's *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* as well as scenes from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*.



Ravenscroft's farce as being a cause for Dryden's having created him. Benito explains:

He, who made this, observed what farces hit,  
Aud durst not disoblige you now with wit.  
But, gentlemen, you over-do the mode;  
You must have fools out of the common road.  
Th' unnatural strained buffoon is only taking;  
No fop can please you now of God's own making. . . .  
You must have Mamamouchi, such a fop  
As would appear a monster in a shop;  
He'll fill your pit and boxes to the brim,  
Where, rammed in crowds, you see yourselves in him. . . .  
Grimace and habit sent you pleased away:  
You damned the poet, and cried up the play.  
This thought had made our author more uneasy,  
But that he hopes I'm fool enough to please ye.

The mention of Mamamouchi in the seventh line is a reference to Ravenscroft's play, V, 1, where Mr. Cleverwit pretends to be the son of the Grand Turk and in this character confers the title "Mamamouchi" upon Mr. Jorden.

But, though Dryden was undoubtedly stimulated to give his audience farce by the success of Ravenscroft's play, his chief model for Benito was his own Sir Martin, the character he had already imitated from Molière.<sup>107</sup> Benito is like Sir Martin in his continued, pitifully unfortunate attempts to show his wit, attempts which always have the opposite result from what they are intended to have, and he is like Sir Martin in the childish unhappiness which these results cause him. When he says in Act IV, Scene 2, "Pray, sir, let me think I am a wit, or my heart will break," Sir Martin might be speaking.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>107</sup> See Chapter V

<sup>108</sup> One of Benito's speeches is almost certainly modeled on one of Sir Martin's (Hartmann, *op cit.*, p. 28, mentions this). This occurs in Act III, Scene 1. Benito has just revealed to Violetta's and Laura's uncle that the young ladies were about to meet some young men secretly, thus, so he thinks, advancing the cause of his master. He does not realize, of course, that the

Langbaine says: <sup>109</sup> "The Humour of *Benito's* affecting Music, to the prejudice of his carcass [I, 1] is borrowed from

gallants with whom the ladies were keeping the assignation were his master Camillo and Aurelian. He exults in his wit

"*Benito* Oh, now, that I had the mirror, to behold myself in the fulness of my glory! and, oh that the domineering fop, my master, were in presence, that I might triumph over him! . [*He looks about him, and sees his master*] How the devil came these three together? .

"*Aurelian* . . . pray what was glorious achievement, which rapt you into such an ecstasy? . . .

"*Benito* . . . Henceforward, tell me no more of the adventure of the garden, nor of the great looking glass . . . tell me no more of that, except you could behold in it a better, a more discreet, or a more able face for stratagem, than I can, when I look there

"*Aurelian* But, to the business. What is this famous enterprise?

"*Benito* Be satisfied, without troubling me further, the business is done, the rogues are defeated, and your mistress is secured. If you would know more, demand it of that criminal [*Pointing to Frontana*], and ask her, how she dares appear before you, after such a signal treachery, or before me, after such an overthrow?"

The same kind of conversation had already taken place in *Sir Martin Mar-all*, Act IV, Scene 1, though in the earlier play the positions had been reversed, the servant being the wit, the master the fool

(*Enter Sir Martin laughing* . . . )

"*Warner* What a murrain is the matter, sir? Where lies this jest that tickles you?

"*Sir Martin* Let me laugh out my laugh, and I'll tell thee

"*Warner* I wish you may have cause for all this mirth

"*Sir Martin* Hereafter Warner, be it known unto thee I will endure no more to be thy May game. Thou shalt no more dare to tell me I spoil thy projects, and discover thy designs. For I have played such a prize, without thy help, of my own mother wit ('tis true I am hasty sometimes, and so do harm, but when I have a mind to show myself there's no man in England, though I say't, comes near me as to point of imagination), I'll make thee acknowledge I have laid a plot that has a soul in't

"*Warner* Pray sir, keep me no longer in ignorance of this rare invention

"*Sir Martin* Know then, Warner, that when I left thee, I was possessed with a terrible fear, that my mistress should be married. Well, thought I to myself, — and mustering up all the forces of my wit, I did produce such a stratagem!"

Of course, Sir Martin's stratagem, like Benito's which was to follow it, harmed those it was intended to aid.

<sup>109</sup> *Op cit*, p 155.

Quinault's Character of *Jodelet* [the valet] in the beginning of his *La Comedie, sans Comedie*." Dryden has developed the incident much more than Quinault did, and, except that he opens the play with his music as the French valet had, Benito has nothing in common with *Jodelet*.

Langbaine's statement,<sup>110</sup> "*Frontona's* [sic] throwing water upon *Laura* and *Violetta* [III, 1] is taken from *Les Contes de M. de la Fontaine. premiere partie, Nov. 11. p. 74,*" is correct except that his reference is faulty. "On Ne S'Avise Jamais De Tout," the *conte* Langbaine means, is the tenth of *Livre II*.

To summarize what has been said about *The Assignment*, this comedy is like *The Mock Astrologer* in being made up of varied and uncongenial elements. The lack of harmony, however, was probably not a sufficient cause for its failure; the real cause was the lack of well-sustained repartee by the witty lovers, the presence of which had enabled audiences to forget the faults of *The Mock Astrologer*. The lack of homogeneity of *The Assignment* apparently did not have the same cause as that of the earlier play. An examination of Dryden's sources, *The Annals of Love* and Scarron's *Roman comique*, shows that he might have made a very regular two-plot tragic-comedy out of what he took from them; but, instead of doing so, he added discordant material to what he had borrowed from each of the plots, destroying the tragicomic contrast and failing to attain any kind of unity.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>110</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 155-156.

<sup>111</sup> Though most critics agree that *The Assignment* is one of Dryden's poorest comedies, there are two exceptions to this opinion. Sir Walter Scott observes (*Works*, IV, 366) that it is on a level with Dryden's other plays, and Montague Summers gives the play an emphatic encomium. In his edition of *The Rehearsal* (p. 118) Mr. Summers says "The *Assignment* . . . is a first-rate play, always smart and not infrequently witty, with ingenious situations, an excellent plot and characterization, and one can only attribute its non-success to some inexplicable caprice of the audience." Mr. Summers wrote

## III

There seems to be more disagreement among Dryden's critics about the merits of *Mr. Limberham*, his last original comedy, than about the merits of any of the others. Dryden claimed in the dedication that it was "of the first rank" of those he had written,<sup>112</sup> and Langbaine agreed with him.<sup>113</sup> Scott was distressed by the indecencies of the play; he admitted that it was "not absolutely without humour," but added that it was "so disgustingly coarse, as entirely to destroy that merit."<sup>114</sup> Saintsbury returned again to the opinion of Langbaine and insisted that at least "from the merely dramatic point of view" it was the best of Dryden's comedies.<sup>115</sup> Modern critics who mention the play are divided; some quote Scott, others Saintsbury. Nicoll is especially decided in taking the side of the former.<sup>116</sup>

Our answer to the question whether *Mr. Limberham* is

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this in 1914. It is interesting to note that when the Phoenix Society revived *The Assignment* in 1925, apparently at Mr. Summers' suggestion, audiences still showed the same "inexplicable caprice." As Mr. Summers explains in the notes of his edition of Downes' *Roscius Anglicanus* (p. 134), by 1925 the whole spirit of the "delightful comedy" had so entirely evaporated "that it became something like a sad and sorry burlesque and was far from being approved by the audience."

Nearly all the other critics agree with the audiences rather than with Scott and Summers. Saintsbury says (*Works*, IV, 368) "It seems to me to be the most flagrant example, except *Amboyna*, of . . . [Dryden's] habit — an avowed habit — of dramatic 'pot-boiling.' Almost all the incidents are forced, the characters are feebly marked and hardly at all worked out, the dialogue is much below the level of *Marriage à la Mode* or *The Mock Astrologer*." Taine, *Histoire de la littérature anglaise*, II, 481-482, cites it as an example of how Dryden " . . . polissonne maladroitement . . . [et] est impie sans élan, en périodes développées." But Taine weakens the force of his remark by saying the same thing about *Marriage à la Mode*.

<sup>112</sup> *Works*, VI, 10.

<sup>113</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 164.

<sup>114</sup> *Works*, VI, 2.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>116</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 218.

among Dryden's best or worst comedies is important, for our opinion as to whether Dryden could be original and artistically successful at the same time depends largely on that answer. Apparently *Mr. Limberham* is the most original of them all, so far as direct borrowings of matter are concerned. Even Langbaine mentions only two slight incidents in it as being taken from an earlier author.<sup>117</sup>

But the decision of an enlightened critic must, I think, be that *Mr. Limberham* cannot be compared absolutely with Dryden's other comedies, for it is written in a totally different genre from theirs. Opinions about which is the better, *Marriage à la Mode* or *Mr. Limberham*, are likely, then, to classify the critic rather than to evaluate the plays. For the former is, as has been shown, a comedy of witty repartee, in which one situation is enough. The latter is a comedy of intrigue, in which the rapid movement of the action and the varying of the situation are all-important; the wit which grows out of these situations counts for little. If one accepts these classifications he can admit that both *Mr. Limberham* and *Marriage à la Mode* are good plays, only adding that they are good for different audiences; Saintsbury apparently realized this fact when he spoke about the merits of the play "from a purely dramatic point of view."<sup>118</sup>

That *Mr. Limberham* was a new kind of play for Dryden has not been made sufficiently clear by critics. No attempt, in fact, has been made to classify it. It has sometimes been

<sup>117</sup> Langbaine says (*op cit*, p. 165) "Mrs. Saintlys discovery of *Love-All* [he means Woodall] in the Chest, *Act I* [he means Act II, Scene 1] is borrow'd from the Novels of *Cynthia Gyraldi*, see *prima parte Deca 3a Nov 3* . . . Mrs. *Brainsicks* pricking and pinching him, *Act 3 Sc 2*. is copied from the *Triumph of Love over Fortune*, a Novel writ by *M. S. Bremond*, or else from *Zelotide of M. de Pais*"

Langbaine admits that these slight bits are not "worthy to be urg'd against any One, but *Mr. Dryden*, whose Critical Pen spares no Man." No one could claim that they are important.

<sup>118</sup> *Works*, VI, 3.

spoken of as if it were as much in the manners tradition as any of Dryden's plays.<sup>119</sup> To do so is ridiculous. Woodall has the sexual laxity of a manners hero, but that is not enough to make him one, for he lacks Wildblood's grace and wit and refinement; he is nothing more than what Aldo calls him in Act IV, Scene 1, "the genius of whoring."

Some critics have spoken of the difference between *Mr. Limberham* and the other comedies, but they have indicated that this difference is due to the supposed satirical intent of the comedy. When it was first given some of the characters may have been intended to stand for certain of Dryden's contemporaries. If they were, it would be decidedly interesting and worth while to discover just whom Dryden was aiming at. But as the play stands now, at least,<sup>120</sup> it is impossible to make out a clear case for, or rather against, any man. Lauderdale and Shaftesbury have been suggested as having been the models for the keeper himself, but cannot be shown to correspond to him in details. To me it seems quite possible that Dryden had Rochester in mind when he drew the character Woodall.<sup>121</sup> At any rate, the particular satire in *Mr. Limberham* must either have been removed before Dryden published it or have been extremely unimportant in the play as a whole. Otherwise Dryden could not have said in the dedication:

It has nothing of particular satire in it, for whatsoever may have been pretended by some critics in the town, I may safely and solemnly affirm, that no one character has been drawn from any

<sup>119</sup> Nicoll, *op cit*, p. 218. He here discusses *Mr. Limberham's* failure to be successful as if he were speaking of a comedy of manners and as if he thought Dryden had tried to make it one.

<sup>120</sup> Dryden may have removed some of the personal satire from the play before it was published. He says in the dedication (*Works*, VI, 9) that he has "taken a becoming care, that those things which offended on the stage, might be either altered, or omitted in the press." This may refer to personal satire as well as to lubricity.

<sup>121</sup> See my Appendix D.

single; and that I have known so many of the same humour, in every folly which is here exposed, as may serve to warrant it from a particular reflection.<sup>122</sup>

Furthermore, had the personal satire been important and widely recognized, it would most certainly have been referred to by Langbaine in his discussion of the comedy.<sup>123</sup>

Anyone who has read the comedies which at this time were popular at the Duke's theater, particularly those of D'Urfey produced during the decade of the 'seventies, cannot fail to see that *Mr. Limberham* is in their tradition. Like them, it was written for a class of theater-goers different from the one which liked the comedy of manners—for a bourgeois audience. As Scott has pointed out,<sup>124</sup> this probably explains why it was acted at the Duke's theater in Dorset Garden, the citizens' establishment.<sup>125</sup> It was one of the class of comedies of which the lines in Ravenscroft's prologue to *The Citizen Turned Gentleman*, also given in the Duke's theater, were true:

From the court party we hope no success,  
Our author is not one of the noblesse.

Nicoll in his *History of Restoration Drama* has well discussed the citizen's comedies,<sup>126</sup> comedies of intrigue and farce by Mrs. Behn, Ravenscroft, and D'Urfey, but he has not noted that *Mr. Limberham* is in the same convention.<sup>127</sup> D'Urfey's comedies especially are in the manner of *Mr. Limberham* and

<sup>122</sup> *Works*, VI, 10.

<sup>123</sup> Of course, *Mr. Limberham* does have satire in it—as nearly every Restoration comedy had, comedies of manners included. The question, however, is whether the satire was against known individuals

<sup>124</sup> *Works*, VI, 3.

<sup>125</sup> Dryden apparently had been making a practice of writing a different kind of comedy for this theater than for the King's theater. See Chapter III, p. 124, n. 138

<sup>126</sup> Pp. 207–214 and 260–267.

<sup>127</sup> Nicoll, in fact, overwhelmed by the difficulty of distributing Dryden's several comedies among the different genres—manners, humours, intrigue, etc.—has put Dryden in a class by himself.

must have influenced Dryden. To prove this, I shall give a résumé of D'Urfey's *Fond Husband*. The reason for the selection of this play — it follows the pattern of many others given in Dorset Garden, though it happened to be given in Drury Lane — will appear during the discussion.<sup>128</sup>

*A Fond Husband* is so named because it has to do with the attempts of Bubble, a uxorious, silly old man to discover his wife, Emillia, *in flagrante delictu* with a young gallant, Rashley. Bubble has a senile tenderness for his wife, however. He calls her "chicken" and other pet names and shows himself excessively credulous in accepting her explanations for embarrassing situations in which she and Rashley are time after time surprised. For instance, in one scene (Act III, Scene 1) Bubble goes out and returns suddenly to find Rashley and Emillia together, but she manages to put her maidservant, Snare, in her place, and to convince the gullible Bubble that Rashley was paying his court to Snare. Bubble is thereupon forced to beg Emillia's pardon for his suspicions — as he often is in the comedy — saying in this instance:

Chicken! dear Chicken, — don't frown so' — I confess I was a Fool; — but forgive me but this once, and if ever I offend agen, I'll give thee leave to Cuckold me indeed.<sup>129</sup>

Maria, Bubble's sister, however, is especially interested in having Bubble put an end to the affair, since she herself is in love with Rashley. Maria therefore finally plants Bubble at the door of the chamber in which Emillia and Rashley are at the time. But in the meanwhile Ranger, another wild young man who has long been anxious to bring about the ruination of Rashley so that he himself may cuckold Bubble, is enabled by the treachery of the governess to enter the chamber by an-

<sup>128</sup> Mrs. Behn's *Debauchee, or, The Credulous Cuckold* and its importance in this tradition should, perhaps, have been mentioned here, too.

<sup>129</sup> *A Fond Husband*, III, 1.



other entrance. Emillia is not at a loss. She hides Rashley under the table, puts the door key into Ranger's pocket, and cries "Rape." The result is that Bubble forgives her and offers her an apology for having suspected her virtue. The play continues through a long series of such adventures until finally Bubble does discover his wife's unchastity. It ends with his declaring that he will cast her off in disgrace.

This is just such a play as Dryden wrote. Like it, *Mr. Limberham* is laid in London and has to do with the unsuccessful efforts of two credulous old citizens, Limberham and Brain-sick, to prevent young Woodall from "grafting" horns on them. In *Mr. Limberham*, as in *A Fond Husband*, the interest is held by the variety of the intrigue, not by the wit or the grace of the characters. In these things it is like not only *A Fond Husband*, but a large number of the citizen's comedies of the Restoration. It is following an accepted pattern.

The reason that *A Fond Husband* was chosen to represent the whole class of citizen comedies which preceded Dryden's play is that Dryden seems to have been especially strongly influenced by it. It had been given too recently, of course,<sup>180</sup> for him to borrow whole scenes or even definite lines from it. But it affected his play in the same way as *The Adventures of Five Hours* affected *The Rival-Ladies*, or as *Love in a Tub* did *The Maiden Queen*.

The resemblance of *Mr. Limberham* to *A Fond Husband* is striking in many ways. In the first place, the character Limberham's excessive credulity, his readiness to apologize to his erring mistress, even his habit of calling her by the pet name of "Pug," may have been suggested by D'Urfey's character Bubble, who calls his mistress "Chicken." Secondly, Pleasant, the young woman whom Woodall finally marries in *Mr. Limberham*, has almost exactly the same rôle that Maria had

<sup>180</sup> *A Fond Husband* was first given in November, 1676.

had in the earlier comedy. Like Maria, Pleasant attempts again and again to awaken and sustain the suspicions of those whom Woodall (Rashley in D'Urfey's comedy) is cuckolding. Thirdly, while all the assignations in chambers and hidings in chests and closets which take place in *Mr. Limberham* might be paralleled in many Restoration dramas, two of these occurrences are especially close to events in *A Fond Husband*. The first is in Act III, Scene 1, in which Mrs. Brainsick succeeds in diverting suspicion from herself by laying it on the maid Judith, just as Emillia had done in Act III, Scene 1, of *A Fond Husband*. The second is in Act V, Scene 1, of *Mr. Limberham*, in which Brainsick posts himself at the door of the chamber in which his wife and Woodall are dallying and in which later Limberham actually discovers Woodall in his mistress's closet, but is convinced that there is no cause for suspicion. These incidents recall the scene in D'Urfey's comedy in which Bubble stands at the chamber door while Rashley and Emillia are inside, and later is convinced that Rashley is innocent.<sup>181</sup> Finally, the sympathetic Father Aldo of *Mr. Limberham* is at least faintly reminiscent of the jolly old Sir Roger Petulant of *A Fond Husband*.<sup>182</sup>

Dryden, of course, realized that in *Mr. Limberham* he was writing a new kind of comedy for him and a lower kind than he had produced before. He shows this in his prologue:

True wit has seen its best days long ago;  
It ne'er looked up, since we were dipt in show;  
When sense in doggrel rhymes and clouds was lost,<sup>183</sup>

<sup>181</sup> *A Fond Husband*, IV, 4.

<sup>182</sup> Scenes of the same kind of low comedy are found at times in plays of the wittier type. Wycherley's *Love in a Wood* is an example, with its scenes in which Sir Simon Addleplot, Lucy, and Mrs. Crossbite appear, but in such plays the interest is not focused on such scenes. They form the underplot to the action in which the witty characters appear, and the resulting effect is quite different from that of D'Urfey's plays.

<sup>183</sup> This particular admission of Dryden that he is beginning to be ashamed

And dulness flourished at the actor's cost.  
Nor stopt it here; when tragedy was done,  
Satire and humour the same fate have run,  
And *comedy is sunk to trick and pun*. . . .  
Let them, who the rebellion first began  
To wit, restore the monarch, if they can;  
Our author dares not be the first bold man.

Dryden is here saying that he realizes that this comedy of "trick and pun" is an inferior kind of comedy, but that he dares not risk displeasing the audience by attempting to bring back the witty comedy he had once written.

The general scheme of the intrigue of *Mr. Limberham*, then, was not new. The humours of the play are no more so. It is true that Dryden has gone beyond D'Urfey in the number of humours employed. Where D'Urfey has *Bubble*, Dryden has *Limberham*, *Brainsick*, *Father Aldo*, and *Mrs. Saintly*. In this the influence of *Shadwell* can perhaps be seen.

It will be remembered that back in 1668 Dryden and *Shadwell* had quarreled about the advisability of using humours in comedy. *Shadwell* had started the quarrel by attacking the morality of *Celadon* and *Florimel* of Dryden's *Maiden Queen*<sup>184</sup> and arguing that a comedy of humours in imitation of *Jonson* was preferable. Dryden had answered by an attack not only on *Shadwell*, but on the comedy of humours. In the preface to *The Mock Astrologer*, the epilogue to *The Conquest of Granada*, and in the defense of that epilogue which

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of the fustian of his heroic plays is not often noted. It should be considered in connection with the prologue to *Aureng-Zebe* and the preface to *The Spanish Friar*.

<sup>184</sup> *Shadwell* apparently has *Celadon* and *Florimel* in mind when he says in his preface to *The Sullen Lovers*: " . . . in the plays which have been wrote of late . . . the two chief persons are most commonly a Swearing, Drinking, Whoring Ruffian for a Lover, and an impudent ill-bred tomrig for a Mistress, and these are the fine People of the Play. . . ."

was published with the play, he had made the pronouncement that the time for humours was past. Those who wanted to please the present age, he had said, would have to give up such dull, mechanical comedy and imitate the repartee of their witty contemporaries. In the dedications to *Marriage à la Mode* and *The Assignation* Dryden had continued the same argument, claiming that he had achieved the wit of the two plays by listening to such courtiers as Rochester and Sedley.

During the five years that intervened between *The Assignation* and *Mr. Limberham*, however, Dryden had apparently come to the conclusion that Restoration audiences were not so sophisticated as he had thought, or rather that they were *becoming* less sophisticated. As has been indicated, the fact that he was now writing for the Duke of York's theater in Dorset Garden may have had something to do with his changed attitude. At any rate, the humours which had once been anathema to him were now acceptable. He does not defend them in his preface or his prologue, but he is at least willing to use them.

Shadwell had shown on several occasions that humours could please Restoration audiences. It is true that more and more as time went on he took to mixing with these characters witty gallants and ladies who were more or less in the manners/tradition.<sup>165</sup> But he never gave up his humours. His continual boast is that each new play has several humours "entirely new."

It is an interesting fact that Dryden and Shadwell were again friendly at this time; <sup>166</sup> the mutual understanding that

<sup>165</sup> This statement is especially true of *Epsom-Wells* (1672); there is in it much witty, anti-Platonic philosophizing about love and inconstancy. The wits show that they intend to marry at the end, like all their fellows in the comedy of manners, but their decision is that for people of wit and birth promiscuity is the becoming way of life.

<sup>166</sup> The completeness of Dryden's about-face in his attitude toward Shad-

had been nurtured by their common contempt for Settle had not yet died. So friendly were they that Dryden wrote the prologue for Shadwell's play, *A True Widow*, which appeared in the Duke's theater about the same time that *Mr. Limberham* did (c. March, 1677/8).<sup>187</sup>

It seems likely, then, that Shadwell's successful presentation of humours may have caused Dryden to include a number of them in *Mr Limberham*.<sup>188</sup> But this is as far as the influence can be shown to have gone. Shadwell's humours did not aid Dryden, for there is nothing in Brainsick or in Father Aldo that is essentially different from what Dryden had produced in *The Wild Gallant*. They are the same personified eccentricities that Justice Trice and Sir Timorous had been, and are as mechanical and lifeless. They show little of the observation that is revealed in Shadwell's best humours — Sir Positive At-

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well was perhaps aided by his having lost the friendship of Rochester, who had taken the part of Settle against him.

<sup>187</sup> The likeness between these two plays is interesting. *A True Widow*, like *Mr Limberham*, pretended to be a satire, and in the preface to the play, when it was published in 1680, Shadwell made the same statement with regard to it that Dryden had made about *Mr Limberham* that it failed because it attacked "the crying sin of keeping." The friendship of Dryden and Shadwell apparently did not last long, for it was only about a year later that Dryden wrote *Mac Flecknoe*.

It should perhaps be added that it is not altogether certain that Dryden wrote the prologue to *A True Widow*. The fact that after his next quarrel with Shadwell the prologue was transferred to Aphra Behn's *Widow Ranter* makes it seem probable that it was his but Percy J. Dobell in *John Dryden, Biographical Memoranda*, p. 22, says that he thinks Dryden was probably not the author of the prologue.

<sup>188</sup> In the list of dramatis personae of *Mr Limberham* there is an indication that Shadwell's successes had had some effect on Dryden. Each of the humours of *The Wild Gallant* had been described with a phrase. Lord Non such was "an old rich humorous lord. Sir Timorous, "a bashful knight." Shadwell, however, had tried to give a fuller explanation of just what each character's humour consisted. In *Mr Limberham* Dryden does this too. Limberham, for instance, is characterized in the dramatis personae as "a tame, foolish keeper, persuaded by what is last said to him, and changing next word," and Brainsick is "a husband, who, being well conceited of himself, despises his wife, vehement and eloquent, as he thinks, but indeed a talker of nonsense."

all, Ninny and Woodcock of the *Sullen Lovers* and Sir Nicholas Gimcrack of the *Virtuoso* had all had a convincing quality about them which made them seem as if they were drawn from life, as some of them were.

After this has been said it is scarcely necessary to add that the humours of *Mr. Limberham* are not would-be wits. Although Dryden had shown by his complimentary epilogue to Etherege's *Sir Fopling Flutter* that he could appreciate a well-drawn would-be,<sup>189</sup> he never created one himself. One is not surprised to find no would-be's here, at any rate, in view of the fact that there are no true wits in *Mr. Limberham*; for Sir Foplings lose their effect when there is no clever Dorimant with which to contrast them.

Naturally, were the humours the only thing that give interest to *Mr. Limberham*, these limitations from which they suffer would be enough to spoil it as a play. But they are not. What made Langbaine, Scott and Saintsbury, and Dryden himself prefer it to the other comedies, was, as has been said, the liveliness and the variety of the intrigue. Not a moment passes without Woodall's cuckolding another keeper or husband, lying with the maid, or being forced to hide in a trunk or a closet. Though these events follow the same plan that D'Urfey followed, though they have the same mixture of farce in them, they are incomparably better integrated. Here it was that Dryden showed the result of his years of practice in writing plays. The humours of *Mr. Limberham* are not much superior to those of *The Wild Gallant*, but the play is decidedly more lively. In *Mr. Limberham* there is life in the action, if not in the characters.

<sup>189</sup> Dryden says in this epilogue.

"Sir Fopling is a fool so nicely writ  
The ladies would mistake him for a wit; . . .  
So brisk, so gay, so travel'd, so refin'd,  
As he took pains to graff upon his kind."

To return to the humours, however, let us examine them to see if they are as I have claimed.

Limberham has already been shown to have some of the characteristics of D'Urfey's Bubble — enough so that it seems possible that Dryden was influenced by him. Dryden, however, has developed the idiosyncrasy much further than did D'Urfey, who made it only great enough to motivate the plot. Limberham's tameness passes all bounds. Even when he is certain that Tricksy, his mistress, and Woodall are together in the garden house, he refuses to surprise them for fear she might explain everything satisfactorily and be angry with him for being suspicious — this in spite of the fact that he knows that Woodall is a cuckold-maker and has "put the horns" on Brainsick.<sup>140</sup> This meekness is seen also in Limberham's inability to make a decision. As Dryden describes him in the *dramatis personae*, he is "persuaded by what is last said to him and changing next word." In exhibiting this feature of the character Dryden is especially mechanical. For instance, in Act II, Scene 1, Limberham has tried to open the chest in which Woodall is hiding, but has been unable to because the lid was being held shut from the inside. The other characters, one by one, make conflicting suggestions as to what Limberham should do next, and one by one he agrees with them.<sup>141</sup> Were it not that the play keeps moving with speed, such humours would certainly bore us.

But though the humours are uninteresting dramatically, the search for the source of certain of them is an entertaining critical exercise. Brainsick, for instance, attempts to use the grandiloquent language of romances in a way which recalls strongly Puntarvolo of Jonson's *Every Man Out of his Humour*. In fact, the two characters are so much alike that, in spite of the absence of demonstrably borrowed lines, it

<sup>140</sup> *Mr. Limberham*, IV, 1.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 1.

seems likely that Puntarvolo suggested the character of Brainsick.<sup>142</sup> Brainsick, however, is not quite so well drawn as is Puntarvolo and at one time exhibits the pretensions of a would-be wit rather than those of a knight of romance.<sup>143</sup>

Mrs. Saintly, the hypocritical, fanatic landlady who keeps the boarding house which is the arena in which Woodall performs his feats, has, of course, like all hypocrites of Restoration comedy, been said to have been imitated from Molière's *Tartuffe*.<sup>144</sup> But, in addition to the fact that her sex and her relation to the other characters are different from those of *Tartuffe*, the absence of any great effort to hide her real nature distinguishes her from him. Molière's character ex-

<sup>142</sup> Don Quixote, a character of the same kind, might also have influenced Dryden here.

<sup>143</sup> In *Mr Limberham*, III, 1, Brainsick says: "... Am I excluded from my own fortress, and by the way of barricado? Am I to dance attendance at the door, as if I were some base plebeian groom? I'll have you know, that, when my foot assaults, the lightning and the thunder are not so terrible as the strokes brazen gates shall tremble, and bolts of adamant dismount from off their hinges, to admit me," and in V, 1, he says, "[I mean] to stand before the door with my brandished blade, and defend the entrance. He dies upon the point if he approaches." A few lines farther he adds "... with this sabre I defy the destinies, and dam up the passage with my person; like a rugged rock, opposed against the roaring of the boisterous billows. Your jealousy shall have no course through me, though potentates and princes. . . ." In such passages, as in most of the play, he is like Puntarvolo. In III, 1, however, he poses as the kind of gentleman who longs to hear the latest opera and who dashes off a song himself when he is unoccupied. When he starts to sing the words to an air he has just finished and is interrupted by Limberham, he exclaims "Diab!e! Now I will not sing, to spite you. By the world, you are not worthy of it. Well, I have a gentleman's fortune, I have courage, and make no inconsiderable figure in the world yet I would quit my pretensions to all these, rather than not be author of this sonnet, which your rudeness has inevitably lost."

<sup>144</sup> Nicoll (*op cit.*, p. 175) states categorically that Mrs. Saintly is imitated from *Tartuffe*. Carl Hartmann (*op cit.*, pp. 15-16) is probably his source for this statement. Hartmann suggests that both Mrs. Saintly and Lady Dupe of *Sir Martin Mar-all* were imitated, in a general way, from *Tartuffe*. It is to be noted that, in nearly every case in which Hartmann speaks of "allgemeinen Anlehnungen," the fact of influence is improbable. It should be added, however, that one sentence spoken by Mrs. Saintly may have been inspired by a line from *Tartuffe*. See note on next page.



pende enormous energy in deceiving the world. Mrs. Saintly is willing to take off her mask whenever the possibility of satisfying her lust offers itself.

The most striking thing about Mrs. Saintly is, in fact, not her hypocrisy, but her habit of revealing her scandalous appetite without discarding her puritanical formulae of expression. How extremely different she is from *Tartuffe* is indicated by her first appearance in the play. In Act I, Scene 1, upon first meeting Woodall, she asks him if he stays up late. Hearing that he does, she warns him that "that must be amended," but offers to sit up for him, adding:

*Mrs. Saintly.* I have a cup of cordial water in my closet, which will help to strengthen nature, and carry off a debauch. I do not invite you thither; but the house will be safe a-bed, and scandal will be avoided.

*Woodall:* Hang scandal; I am above it at those times.

*Saintly:* But scandal is the greatest part of the offence, you must be secret. And I must warn you of another thing, there are, besides myself, two more young women in my house. . . .

*Woodall:* Oh, very good! Two more young women besides yourself, and both handsome?

*Saintly.* No, verily, they are painted outsides, you must not cast your eyes upon them, nor listen to their conversation: You are already chosen for a better work.

It is always unwise to insist that a character is imitated from another when the supposedly derived character uses none "of the sequences of thought of the original similarly expressed." And in this case the characters are far apart.<sup>148</sup> Until some new find is made, Mrs. Saintly should be credited to Dryden. About the only thing that can be said to modify this state-

<sup>148</sup> As noted above, one sentence which Mrs. Saintly speaks seems to have been inspired by *Tartuffe*. In IV, 5, of Molière's play *Tartuffe* says "Le scandale du monde est ce qui fait l'offense," and in I, 1 of *Mr. Limberham* Mrs. Saintly says, "But scandal is the greatest part of the offense."

ment is that the language of her hypocrisy is in the convention of Père André, the character from *Le Pelerin*, which Dryden used during the following year for his *Spanish Friar*,<sup>146</sup> as will be seen by comparing the passage just quoted with speeches by Bremond's friar given in Chapter III. So far as being a libidinous old lady is concerned, she is in the tradition that began with the like character in *The Parson's Wedding*, included Lady Cockwood of Etherege's *She Wou'd If She Cou'd*, and culminated in Congreve's masterpiece, Lady Wishfort of the *Way of the World*.<sup>147</sup>

Father Aldo is one of the most interesting of Dryden's characters, not only because he is a humour, but because of the light he throws on Dryden's attitude toward the ugliest side of sexual immorality, procuring.

Father Aldo is, to put it plainly, a pimp. Apparently he

<sup>146</sup> The success of Wycherley's Mrs. Joyner in *Love in a Wood* may have influenced Dryden in drawing the character of Mrs. Saintly. Mrs. Joyner is "a precise city bawd," who says to Gripe (IV, 1). "I would have witnesses to take notice that you blast my good name, which was as white as a tulip, and as sweet as the head of your cane, before you wrought me to the carrying on the work of your fleshly carnal seekings."

<sup>147</sup> The lascivious old lady who pretended to be excessively good was a much-used type. I have collected the following examples of it:

1. The Widow Love-All of Killigrew's *Parson's Wedding*.
2. Lady Vaine of Shadwell's *Sullen Lovers*.
3. Lady Cockwood of Etherege's *She Wou'd If She Cou'd*.
4. Lady Fidget of Wycherley's *Country Wife*.
5. Lady Gimcrack of Shadwell's *Virtuoso*.
6. Mrs. Saintly of Dryden's *Mr. Limberham*.
7. Lady Beardsly of D'Urfey's *Virtuous Wife*.
8. Lady Froth and Lady Plyant of Congreve's *Double Dealer*.
9. Lady Wishfort of Congreve's *Way of the World*.

It will be noticed, however, that Mrs. Saintly is different from the others. For she uses the language of puritans, the others, the language of Platonic love which sounds as if it had come out of a French romance or a heroic play. Also, it is significant that she is not Lady Saintly.

Dame Purecraft of Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* is hypocritical enough to be included in this list, but not lascivious enough. It might also be noted that Dame Purecraft is like Mrs. Saintly in using the language of puritanism rather than that of Platonic love.

never acts as such for want of money, but because the practice helps compensate for his lost potency. That is, he is a kind of pervert, a *voyeur*, if you like, and therefore he is a humour. We laugh, or are supposed to laugh, at the incongruity of a worn-out body and a still sensual mind. If this were all, we might pass him with little notice, but we cannot help observing that, while Dryden undoubtedly intended us to laugh at Father Aldo, he intended this laughter to be kindly. Father Aldo is never brought to grief, for Dryden apparently viewed him sympathetically. In the description which he placed opposite his name in the *dramatis personae* he called Aldo "an honest, good-natured, free-hearted old gentleman of the town."

So, in spite of his activities in the play,<sup>148</sup> Father Aldo is not looked at by Dryden with the same satirical eye as are Limberham, Brainsick, and Mrs. Saintly. His position is much the same as that of Justice Trice in *The Wild Gallant*, who also showed a reminiscent though impotent love for prostitutes.<sup>149</sup> Such characters as this, and not the Celadons, Florimels, Palamedes, and Doralices, are what give some color of truth to those critics who claim that Dryden's plays are at times downright vicious.

Dryden seems, in fact, to have been in a particularly vicious frame of mind when he wrote *Mr. Limberham*. It was not enough for him to allow pimping to thrive. It was not enough to represent cuckolding as being carried on just off stage in three scenes, and to arrange for the rattle of a bed to be heard in one instance, so as to leave in the minds of even the least imaginative no doubt of what was taking place. It was not enough to have Brainsick stand watch at the door of a chamber in which his wife was making him a cuckold.

<sup>148</sup> See especially the first part of Act IV, Scene 1, of *Mr. Limberham*.

<sup>149</sup> IV, 1.

The infection extended even to the language of the one chaste character in the play. Mrs. Pleasance, the beautiful heiress who is kept physically virtuous until the end so that Woodall can top off with the conventional marriage, *talks* almost exactly like the others. In fact, in Act III, Scene 1, her comparison of a boarding house with a brothel outdoes the speech of all the other women in coarseness. One is forced, finally, to agree with Nicoll when he says of *Mr. Limberham*: "A sickening atmosphere of sex and animalism hangs over it. . . . There is nothing to atone for the foetid odour that seems to hang about it."<sup>150</sup>

A few questions remain to be touched on. In the first place, Dryden has followed Jonson,<sup>151</sup> as he had in *The Wild Gallant*, in the practice of having the characters who open the play give sketches of the other characters before they appear.<sup>152</sup> Much of the first scene is obviously informative — most artificially so when Gervase meticulously informs Woodall of everything he (Woodall) has done while he has been abroad. This is even worse than Jonson's expositions.<sup>153</sup>

Woodall's polyglot language, by the use of which he seeks to convince Limberham that he is an Italian essence peddler,<sup>154</sup> may very well have been suggested by the *lingua franca* which the supposed Turks use in Acts IV and V of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. The likeness between the two scenes is especially close in one particular. In Dryden's play the character Limberham, finding that he can understand

<sup>150</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 218.

<sup>151</sup> Dryden also refers to *The Alchemist* at the very end of I, 1.

<sup>152</sup> *Mr. Limberham*, I, 1. As noted in Chapter I (p. 19, n. 56), Jonson was imitated widely in this particular during the Restoration, by the writers of comedies of manners especially.

<sup>153</sup> In fact, Jonson usually informs his audience much more subtly than this. See, for instance, *The Alchemist*, I, 1, where Face recalls to Subtle what he did before the partnership of the two.

<sup>154</sup> *Mr. Limberham*, I, 1.

the supposed essence peddler when the latter says, "*Seignior, io non canno takare ten guunneo possibilmentè; 'tis to my losso,*" also tries to talk the language, saying, "*Seignioro, stay a littlo, and consider wello, ten guinnio is monyo, a very considerablo summo.*" This must have been suggested by M. Jourdain's attempt in Act V, Scene 4, of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* to speak as Cleonte and his singing servants have been speaking. After listening to them M. Jourdain says: "*Strouf, strif, strof, straf. Monsieur est un grande segnore, grande segnore, grande segnore; et madame, une granda dama, granda dama.*"<sup>155</sup> That is, both Cleonte and Woodall pretend to be speaking a foreign language, and both M. Jourdain and Limberham, finding that the language is apparently not so difficult as they had supposed, try to do likewise.<sup>156</sup>

Finally, reminiscences of Shakespeare and Elizabethan literature are, of course, to be found here, since Dryden wrote *Mr. Limberham* about the same time that he wrote *All for Love* and just before *Troilus and Cressida*, that is, in the midst of the period in which he began to appreciate Shakespeare most. The characters of the comedy and the method of working out the plot owe nothing to him.<sup>157</sup> Limberham, however, exaggerates his exasperation at Tricksey's unfaithfulness by saying:

<sup>155</sup> The proof Dryden gives elsewhere that he was well acquainted with Molière's plays makes it seem likely that he was inspired in this instance directly by the French dramatist, but it is worth noting that Ravenscroft's adaptation of this scene might have called it to Dryden's attention. In V, 1, of *The Citizen Turned Gentleman* Mr. Jorden says to Mr. Cleverwit "... Strouf, strif, strof, straf; this is a *Doc-tore, a Doc-tore* . . .," but the rest of his speech is in practically unmodified English. Dryden had referred to Ravenscroft's play earlier in the prologue to *The Assignment*. See p. 188.

<sup>156</sup> It seems odd that Carl Hartmann (*op cit*, p. 29), who noted many faint resemblances between Molière and Dryden, has not mentioned this strong one; nor have any of the critics who followed him.

<sup>157</sup> Dryden nearly always praises Shakespeare as a writer of tragedies only.

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Thou has robbed me of my repose for ever: I am like Macbeth, after the death of good King Duncan; methinks a voice says to me, — Sleep no more; Tricky has murdered sleep.<sup>158</sup>

That Dryden's interest in Elizabethan literature as a whole was greater than it had been when he made the famous errors of the preface to *The Rival-Ladies*<sup>159</sup> is possibly indicated by Woodall's claim that Friar Bacon's head had been lately speaking to him<sup>160</sup> and by Pleasance's comparison of Woodall to Sir Cranion of Drayton's *Nymphidia*.<sup>161</sup>

<sup>158</sup> *Mr Limberham*, IV, 2. See also pages 139-141 for evidence of reminiscences of Shakespeare in *The Spanish Friar*, which was probably written about a year later than this play.

<sup>159</sup> See p. 6, n. 22.

<sup>160</sup> *Mr. Limberham*, V, 1.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 1.

## CHAPTER V

### DRYDEN'S ADAPTATIONS OF MOLIÈRE

DRYDEN'S readiness to avoid the labor of original composition when he could borrow from the work of others has been abundantly illustrated in the discussion of the sources of the comedies already treated. Once almost at the beginning and once near the end of his period of dramatic composition, however, he wrote plays in which the borrowed material is even a larger part of the finished play than in any of these comedies, so that the plays which resulted must be called adaptations. *Sir Martin Mar-all* (1667) and *Amphitryon* (1690) are both largely taken from Molière. The former is an adaptation of the French dramatist's first play, *L'Étourdi*,<sup>1</sup> and the latter is a reworking of his *Amphitryon*.<sup>2</sup>

As will be shown, Dryden added a considerable amount of original material to each of these comedies. In view of the lack of unity which resulted from such a practice in certain of his other plays, in *The Mock Astrologer* particularly, one might expect that these plays would suffer in the same way. But they do not. In each case Dryden has made his additions in the spirit of what he borrowed, or at least — as in the subplot which he added to *Sir Martin* — has avoided any disturbing contradictions of that spirit. The result was that the two plays were among the most popular Dryden wrote.

<sup>1</sup> As is shown below, Dryden used Quinault's *L'Amant indiscret* to almost as great an extent as *L'Étourdi*. *L'Étourdi* was given in Lyon in 1653 and in Paris in 1658.

<sup>2</sup> Molière's *Amphitryon* appeared in 1668.

Downes says<sup>3</sup> that *Sir Martin*, together with Etherege's *Love in a Tub*, "got the company more than any preceding comedy." He also says that it was acted thirty days together at its first appearance, four times at Court, and later<sup>4</sup> for three days to full audiences in the New Theatre in Dorset Garden.<sup>5</sup> *Amphitryon* was also apparently a success. It was long a stock play and, though Downes' comment on it is vague; he apparently wishes to indicate that it was well liked.<sup>6</sup>

## I

Many scholars have mentioned only Molière's *L'Étourdi* as the source of *Sir Martin Mar-all*,<sup>7</sup> but the German scholar,

<sup>3</sup> John Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> November 9, 1671.

<sup>5</sup> The chief reason that Dryden's adaptations of Molière have not been sufficiently appreciated by modern critics is that those who have treated them have usually been worshipers of Molière who could not bear to see his plays changed in any way (The same thing might be said of much of the criticism of Shakespearean adaptations). For instance, W. Harvey-Jellie, in his discussion of *Sir Martin Mar-all* in *Les Sources du théâtre anglais à l'époque de la Restauration*, p. 90, says "L'auteur anglais fait preuve d'un manque de dignité, d'une lourdeur d'esprit, d'une grossièreté et d'une vulgarité qui trahissent sa nature épaisse et endormie, si différente du génie fin et noble du théâtre français."

<sup>6</sup> *Op cit.*, p. 41. Montague Summers in a note to his edition of Downes (p. 242) enumerates *Amphitryon*'s revivals, ending with the two performances given under his own direction by the Phoenix Society in London in 1922, which were received with "great applause."

<sup>7</sup> Though Langbaine in *An Account of the English Dramatic Poets*, p. 170, mentioned both *L'Étourdi* and Quinault's *L'Amant indiscret* with equal emphasis as sources, the tendency has been to magnify the influence of the first play and minimize that of the second. Downes (*op cit.*, p. 28) and Genest (*Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830*, I, 76) refer only to Molière's play as the source. Scott (*Works*, III, 2-3) mentions Quinault, but makes the error of saying that "Molière's play is followed with considerable exactness, allowing for such variations as the change of scene from Paris to London appeared naturally to demand" (Scott apparently did not notice that the scene of *L'Étourdi* is laid in Messina), and Saintsbury allows Scott to remain uncorrected.



Philip Ott,<sup>8</sup> finally made it clear that nearly half the play was closely imitated from Quinault's *L'Amant indiscret*, and in 1906 L. Albrecht, another German, made a careful study of the play,<sup>9</sup> crediting Quinault and Molière<sup>10</sup> line by line with the parts of Dryden's play which were taken from each of them. From Albrecht's dissertation, which is a model of exhaustive scholarship of the German kind, it can be seen that Dryden has followed Quinault very closely during slightly more than the first half of the play—to near the end of Act III—and that from there on he has followed Molière with equal closeness.<sup>11</sup> Albrecht also pointed out Dryden's addition of the Lady Dupe—Lord Dartmouth—Mrs. Christian plot to what he took from the two French dramatists.

So far as Dryden's use of his French sources is concerned, there is nothing to be added to the work of Albrecht. He showed that the material borrowed from the two sources fused easily, since both *L'Amant indiscret* and *L'Étourdi* were imitated from the same Italian comedy, Nicolò Barbieri's *L'Inavvertito*,<sup>12</sup> and that Dryden has changed very little most of the incidents which he borrowed. Albrecht, however, did

<sup>8</sup> Philip Ott, *Über das Verhältnis des Lustspiel-dichters Dryden zu Molière*, pp. 13–16.

<sup>9</sup> L. Albrecht, *Dryden's Sir Martin Mar-all in Bezug auf seine Quellen*. Montague Summers avoids the error of Scott and Saintsbury and puts sufficient stress on the importance of Dryden's debt to Quinault (*Dryden, The Dramatic Works*, II, 75). He fails, however, to put sufficient stress on Summers' debt to Ott and Albrecht.

<sup>10</sup> The Molière part of the play is said to have been derived from a translation of *L'Étourdi* by the Duke of Newcastle. The play was at first credited to the Duke, though Pepys observed (*Diary*, August 16, 1667) that it was "as everybody says corrected by Dryden." It was first published under Dryden's name in 1697.

<sup>11</sup> On the part of the comedy which is imitated from Molière, Carl Hartmann's parallel passages (*Einfluss Molière's auf Dryden's komisch-dramatische Dichtungen*, pp. 19–25) are perhaps slightly more nearly complete than Albrecht's, and are certainly easier to work with. Hartmann's field, however, did not include Quinault.

<sup>12</sup> It appeared in 1630.

not discuss the changes Dryden has made and their significance as fully as he might have.

These changes, which are to be spoken of later, are less surprising, perhaps, than the *lack* of changes in the major part of the play. Elsewhere Dryden has usually made striking alterations of his borrowed material. There are two reasons why he did not do so here. In the first place, since *Sir Martin Mar-all* was an avowed adaptation and did not pretend to be original, modification for the sake of disguise was not necessary. In the second place, the two plays used by Dryden were already such as could easily be appreciated by English audiences.

*L'Étourdi*, for instance, is largely farcical. Restoration England liked this side of Molière, as is shown by what its dramatists borrowed for other plays. Such comedies as *Le Mariage forcé*, *Le Dépit amoureux*, and (in many other instances, as is shown below) *L'Étourdi* were their favorites. The productions of Molière which were antithetical to their spirit were his corrective plays, like *Tartuffe* and *L'Avare*.<sup>13</sup>

The changes Dryden did make in the characters he borrowed<sup>14</sup> were probably caused largely by one important al-

<sup>13</sup> Shadwell did adapt *L'Avare*, but the adaptation is ineffective, since he mixed Molière's corrective spirit with the Restoration attitude. He changed the young lover of the play into a Restoration gallant (see Albert S. Borgman, *Thomas Shadwell*, p. 143). When, however, Dryden did much the same thing with *Lélie* in drawing the character of Sir Martin, the character still fitted perfectly well into the farcical play.

<sup>14</sup> A short résumé of the manner in which Dryden uses the plots of Quinault and Molière follows. At the first he uses Quinault. In I, 1, of Dryden's play Sir Martin accidentally reveals to Sir John Swallow his plot to lodge Milliscent in the house with him as Cleandre reveals a like plot to Lisipe (I, 4 and 5), with the result that Sir John moves her to another lodging, as does Lisipe. Warner's hiding in Milliscent's room (II, 2) and his plot to get rid of Sir John by introducing the landlord in disguise with false news of Sir John's father's death is foiled by the heedlessness of Sir Martin, in much the same way that like events occur in Quinault (II, 4, and II, 9). Finally in Act III, Scene 3, of Dryden's play Warner tries again to get rid of Sir John by

teration he felt was necessary in the working out of the plot. Molière had had the foolish hero, in spite of his lack of wit, win the heroine at the end of the play. It might be claimed that, notwithstanding the farcical nature of the plot, this improbable ending was a flaw in Molière's comedy. At any rate, Dryden apparently could not bring himself to represent a mentally normal young lady like Millisent as being married to such a man. He therefore bestowed her on the servant Warner<sup>15</sup> and punished Sir Martin by marrying him to Millisent's servant Rose, using the familiar Restoration device of a double-masked marriage to make this arrangement possible.

Warner had to be changed in order, it seems, for him to be worthy of Millisent. Dryden has effected this change most obviously by having it develop that the servant has really been a gentleman all along.<sup>16</sup> But he has dignified Warner in other ways too. It is true that during most of the time Warner is just such a *fourbe* as were Molière's Mascarille and Quinault's Philipin; like the former, he aspires to be known as the prince of tricksters,<sup>17</sup> and like Philipin, he craftily exacts a steady

stealing "the papers concerning the jointure" and persuading Rose to tell him they are left in the country, as does Cleandie's valet (III, 1 and 5). But here the close likeness between Dryden and Quinault ceases, since Warner's plot is foiled again by the folly of Sir Martin, while Philipin's (Cleandre's valet's) plot succeeds, removing the rival from Quinault's play and leaving only the heroine's mother to be contended with. During the rest of the play Dryden utilizes *L'Étourdi*. Warner continues to make plans for outwitting Moody and Sir John, and Sir Martin continues to cause his plans to fail.

<sup>15</sup> Albrecht (*op cit*, p 78) believes he has found the source for this new ending in Shirley's *Love in a Maze* (Act III), where Aurelia says to her importunate and hairbrained suitor Caperwit

"I would rather marry my father's serving-man  
And stand at livery myself, than be  
Wife to a man so ungrateful."

This theory, of course, is ridiculous. It should be added, however, that Albrecht is elsewhere more judicious than this sample of his work makes him seem.

<sup>16</sup> *Sir Martin Mar-all*, V, 3.

<sup>17</sup> For instance, he says (IV, 1):

"After this exploit, I will have Lilly draw me in the habit of a hero, with

stream of money from his master, but he is ennobled by being made much more honest than was Philipin. The latter steals two of the four louis he has been asked to give Lucesse's maid<sup>18</sup> and lies about it to his master,<sup>19</sup> while Warner honestly hands over the whole amount.<sup>20</sup> Elsewhere, Warner is much more interested in maintaining his reputation for wit than he is in money, and when Lord Dartmouth offers him five hundred pounds if he will marry Sir Martin to Mrs. Christian, he says: "I am resolved to bestow my master upon [Millisent] . . . for the honour of my wit is engaged in it." Dryden also embellishes Warner with one attribute of a gentleman by adding the lute-playing incident to the comedy.<sup>21</sup> By this means Warner is shown to be an accomplished musician. Of course, Warner's solving of Lord Dartmouth's problem by marrying Sir John Swallow to Mrs. Christian was added by Dryden, since it is a part of the subplot which, as is to be made evident later, is entirely his.

In one particular of Warner's character Dryden has improved on Molière in a way that is surprising. Mascarille, seeking to put a stop to Léandre's courtship of Célié, convinces him of her unchastity by a bald statement that she is common property.<sup>22</sup> Warner, however, insinuates suspicion into his mind with cleverness and subtlety:

a laurel on my temples, and an inscription below it, *This is Warner, the flower of serving-men.*"

Molière's Mascarille had said (II, 11):

"                   que l'on s'apprête  
A me peindre en héros un laurier sur la tête,  
Et qu'au bas du portrait on mette en lettres d'or:  
*Vivat Mascarillus, fourbum imperator!*"

<sup>18</sup> *L'Amant indiscret*, III, 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 3

<sup>20</sup> *Sir Martin Mar-all*, III, 3

<sup>21</sup> Langbaine says and Albrecht proves (*op cit.*, p. 73) that this incident was taken from Book 7 of the *Histoire comique de Francion*, a book written in French by Charles Sorel (under the name of N. de Moulinet, sieur du Parc) and translated into English in 1655.

<sup>22</sup> *L'Etourdi*, III, 2.

*Warner:* . . . Do you not know she ever loved him, and can you hope she has forsaken him? You may make yourself miserable, if you please, by such a marriage.

*Sir John:* When she's once mine, her virtue will secure me.

*Warner:* Her virtue!

*Sir John:* What, do you make a mock on't?

*Warner:* Not I; I assure you, sir, I think it no jesting matter.

*Sir John.* Why, is she not honest?

*Warner:* Yes, in my conscience is she; for Sir Martin's tongue's no slander.

*Sir John:* But does he say to the contrary?

*Warner:* If one would believe him — which, for my part, I do not, — he has in a manner confessed it to me.

*Sir John:* Hell and damnation!

*Warner.* Courage, sir, never vex yourself, I'll warrant you 'tis all a lie.

*Sir John:* But, how shall I be sure 'tis so?

*Warner:* When you are married, you'll soon make trial, whether she be maid or no.<sup>23</sup>

While Dryden made Warner cleverer than he had been in the earlier comedies to cause him to be worthy of Millisent, he made Sir Martin even more foolish than he had been in order to represent him as even more worthy of being duped. We notice this fact particularly in the first scene of the play, where Sir Martin's pretensions to wit are especially ridiculous. The young knight is irritated because the plan to have Millisent lodge in his own house was not his own, and he protests to Lady Dupe:

<sup>23</sup> *Sir Martin Mar-all*, IV, 1. The slight similarity which this passage has to II, 4, of Molière's *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* is probably accidental. If there is influence, it is that of Dryden on Molière, since Molière's play was written two years later than Dryden's. Summers mentions this fact in *Dryden, The Dramatic Works*, II, 76.

*Sir Martin*: Lord, cousin, what ado is here with your counsell! As though I could not have thought of that myself. I could find in my heart not to send him now — stay a little — I could find out some other way.

*Warner*: A minute's stay may lose your business.

*Sir Martin*: Well, go then, but you must grant, if he had stayed, I could have found a better way — you grant it.

And later in the scene he says: “. . . a thousand things are hammering in this head; 'tis a fruitful noddle, though I say it.” This tendency in *Sir Martin* to fancy himself an ingenious person is carried by Dryden far beyond what it had been in the heroes of Molière and Quinault. Quinault's character, in fact, is merely indiscreet rather than a fool, and the valet says of him:<sup>24</sup> “ Il a beaucoup de coeur, mais peu de jugement.”<sup>25</sup>

Dryden's additions to the character of Moody are much more important and interesting than any mentioned thus far. Moody's antecedents in Quinault's *Lidame* and Molière's *Trufaldin* had been nothing more than jealous old parents typical of the *commedia dell' arte*. Dryden has made them over into an English humour by adding to the characters, as he combined them from the two source plays, an eccentric love of the plainness and plainspokenness of pre-Restoration England.

There is little doubt that Dryden was writing in the Jonsonian tradition when he drew this character. Moody is described by another character before his entrance in a manner exactly like that of Jonson.<sup>26</sup> Lady Dupe is the one who makes the sketch of him:

<sup>24</sup> *L'Amant indiscret*, III, 5

<sup>25</sup> In Molière's play, too, *Lélie*'s misfortunes are not nearly so chargeable to his pretensions to wit as are those of *Sir Martin*. Scott (*Works*, III, 1-2) has noted that Dryden made *Sir Martin* much more contemptible than *Lélie* had been.

<sup>26</sup> Dryden had earlier imitated this device in *The Wild Gallant*. See pp. 17-19.

. . . the old squire is humoursome; he's stout, and plain in speech, and in behaviour; he loves none of the fine town tricks of breeding, but stands up for the old Elizabethan way in all things.<sup>27</sup>

Moreover, Moody is as inactive in advancing the plot of the comedy as was ever a humour of Jonson. Nearly all the business of the play takes place between Sir Martin and Sir John, who compete, with the help of Warner, for the hand of Millisent. Moody is introduced upon the stage now and then merely to exhibit his humour for a moment and then to retire.

It has been shown that for the most part Sir Martin was not changed by Dryden except to heighten his foolishness and thus to make him undoubtedly worthy to be duped at the end of the play. But at times the affectations of a Restoration would-be are added to his character. That this happens only when Moody is on the stage indicates that the addition was made for the sake of the contrast with his old-fashioned humour. In Act III, Scene 1, for instance, when Moody has just insisted that he hates "those you call a man of the town, . . . those empty fellows of mere outside; [who] . . . have nothing of the true old English manliness," Sir Martin enters and reveals himself for the moment as just the kind of person Moody has objected to. He claims to be a critic of "painting, music, poetry and the like" and assures Moody that in all companies he passes for a virtuoso. The old man can hardly bear these pretensions and finally, when Sir Martin says, "You have reason," meaning, of course, "You are right," Moody cries: "There he is again too; the town phrase; a great compliment I wis! *you have reason, sir*: that is, you are no beast, sir." The only trace of this sort of affectation in Sir Martin during most of the play, however, is his continual use of the phrase *in fine*.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *Sir Martin Mar-all*, I, 1

<sup>28</sup> It is apparently not Dryden's intention to make Sir Martin a sustained

Originally Sir John Swallow, too, apparently had some of the affectations of a would-be, but the pages in which this element in his character is revealed were canceled from the first edition (1668) while it was going through the press, and we know of it only through the discovery by Dobell<sup>29</sup> of one of these canceled pages. This page, which once came at the end of Act I, shows that Sir John was represented as defending Sir Martin to Moody for his gallicisms and making several himself. For instance, he explains that Sir Martin's "Pardon me" is now "A la mode." Possibly Dryden felt that this part of the scene lessened the effect of Sir Martin's similar expressions later, but his reasons for the deletion cannot be guessed at with any degree of certainty until a still missing canceled page, the one just before the page printed by Dobell, is also discovered.<sup>30</sup>

Dryden's most important addition to the material which he borrowed from Quinault and Molière was the Lady Dupe-

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would-be. Rather he is a volatile fool who seizes upon any kind of pretense that happens to occur to him at the moment. In Act IV, Scene 1, for instance, he assumes for a time the attitude of a bully when he is protesting against his rival's claim that Millisent is unchaste. Molière's Lélie had merely said

"Quiconque vous l'a dit, est un lâche, un pendard," but Sir Martin blusters out

"Then, sir, whoever told it you, lied in his throat, d'y'e see, and deeper than that, d'y'e see, in his stomach, and his guts, d'y'e see. Tell me she's a common person! he's a son of a whore that said it, and I'll make him eat his words, though he spoke 'em in a privy house"

<sup>29</sup> Percy J. Dobell, *John Dryden, Bibliographical Memoranda*, pp. 7, 30, shows that C<sub>1</sub>, C<sub>2</sub>, and H<sub>4</sub> were canceled from the edition and prints C<sub>2</sub>, which is the only one of these canceled pages now known to be in existence.

<sup>30</sup> In view of the lack of any mention of Dryden's would-be's by critics who have touched on his comedy, it will perhaps be worth while to summarize what has been said about them in this volume. As has been pointed out in Chapter III, *Melantha of Marriage à la Mode* is the only would-be in Dryden's plays who is anywhere near complete. Sir Martin, however, shows rudimentary beginnings of social affectation, and Sir John Swallow apparently did in the comedy as it was performed. Donna Aurelia in *The Mock Astrologer* had a few more of the characteristics of a would-be than did Sir Martin (see p. 169).



Mrs. Christian—Lord Dartmouth plot.<sup>81</sup> This plot is usually mentioned as an example of how immoral Dryden could be. The quotations to be given here will show that the characters in it are far from virtuous. It should be observed, however, that in drawing them Dryden gives us the most convincing realistic comedy to be found in his plays. Lady Dupe, Lord Dartmouth,<sup>82</sup> and Mrs. Christian are excellent refutations of Macaulay's claim that Dryden never created a living character.

In the first scene of the play we see the hypocritical Lady Dupe and her business-like niece laying the plans for tricking Lord Dartmouth into seducing the latter. Lady Dupe has sent her off to the encounter with the words: "My blessings and my prayers go along with thee."

<sup>81</sup> In speaking of this subplot two critics have made interesting mistakes which show how the criticism of Dryden's comedies has sometimes been written. Charlanne in *L'Influence française en Angleterre au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* speaks (p. 264) of "une sous-intrigue ajoutée par Dryden [to *Sir Martin Mar-all*] et empruntée à *L'Amant Indiscret* de Quinault." This is surprising, but it is more surprising to find that Harvey-Jellie, *Les Sources du théâtre Anglais à l'époque de la Restauration*, published in the same year, 1906, as Charlanne's work, makes exactly the same mistake. He says on pages 90-91: "L'intrigue secondaire de la pièce anglaise, intitulée 'The Feigned Innocence,' est empruntée à 'L'Amant Indiscret, ou le Maître Estourdi' de Quinault." How both of these scholars could have thought that it was the subplot of the comedy which came from Quinault is hard to understand until we notice what Scott had said (*Works*, III, 2) about Quinault and the subplot. His words are: "*L'Amant Indiscret* of Quinault, another French play, has also been consulted by Dryden in furbishing forth the Duke of Newcastle's labours. In that part of the play, which occasions its second title of the *Feigned Innocence*, the reader will hardly find enough wit to counterbalance the want of delicacy."

This passage explains everything. Both Charlanne and Harvey-Jellie disregarded the period which follows the word "labours."

<sup>82</sup> One wonders how Dryden happened to pick out the name "Lord Dartmouth." The peerage which now exists under that name was created as a baronetcy in 1682. The successor of the first baronet was made Earl of Dartmouth in 1711. The same question arises in connection with Lord Nonsuch of *The Wild Gallant*. Dryden seems to have named that character after the castle and park of Nonsuch, which was located just outside London, having been built by Henry VIII. See p. 33, n. 86. Dryden used both names before they became real titles.

After the preliminary meeting of Mrs. Christian and Lord Dartmouth in Act II, Scene 1, we see all the characters at their best in Act III, Scene 2:

*(Enter Mrs. Christian to Lady Dupe)*

*Christian:* O madam, I fear I am breeding!

*Lady Dupe:* A taking wench! but 'tis no matter; have you told anybody?

*Christian:* I have been venturing upon your foundations, a little to dissemble.

*Lady Dupe:* That's a good child; I hope it will thrive with thee, as it has with me. Heaven has a blessing in store upon our endeavours.

*Christian:* I feigned myself sick, and kept my bed; my lord, he came to visit me, and, in the end, I disclosed it to him, in the saddest passion!

After she has described his fright, Lord Dartmouth is seen approaching. Mrs. Christian leaves, so that he will not see her with Lady Dupe.

*Lady Dupe:* Now I must play my part;  
Nature, in women, teaches more than art.

*Lord:* Madam, I have a secret to impart; a sad one too, and have no friend to trust, but only you

*Lady Dupe:* Your lady, or your children, sick?

*Lord:* Not that I know.

*Lady Dupe:* You seem to be in health.

*Lord:* In body, not in mind.

*Lady Dupe:* Some scruple of conscience, I warrant; my chaplain shall resolve you.

*Lord:* Madam, my soul's tormented.

*Lady Dupe:* O take heed of despair, my lord!

*Lord:* Madam, there is no medicine for this sickness, but only you; your friendship's my safe haven, else I am lost, and shipwrecked. . . .

*Lady Dupe:* Speak out, my lord, and boldly tell what 'tis.<sup>88</sup>

*Lord:* Then, in obedience to your commands; your cousin is with child.

*Lady Dupe:* Which cousin?

*Lord:* Your cousin Christian, here in the house.

*Lady Dupe:* Alas! then she has stolen a marriage, and undone herself: Some young fellow, on my conscience, that's a beggar; youth will not be advised: well, I'll never meddle more with girls; one is no more assured of them, than grooms of mules; they'll strike when least one thinks on't: But pray, your lordship, what is her choice then for a husband?

*Lord:* She — is not married, that I know of, madam.

*Lady Dupe:* Not married! 'tis impossible; the girl does sure abuse you. I know her education has been such, the flesh could not prevail, therefore, she does abuse you, it must be so.

*Lord:* Madam, not to abuse you longer, she is with child, and I the unfortunate man, who did this most unlucky act.

Lady Dupe soon pretends to faint away.

It can be seen that these characters are not quite like any others in Dryden's dramas. They lack the exaggeration of the humours in *The Wild Gallant* and *Mr. Limberham* and gain thereby an air of reality and convincingness that makes us think of the greater plays of Molière; though Molière would never, of course, have produced such rascals or, if he had, would have punished them instead of observing them

<sup>88</sup> This line follows the first edition. In the Scott-Saintsbury edition it reads merely "Pray tell me what it is." This version obscures the rhythm of the lines which at this point should be read as blank verse. See next page, n. 35.

with sympathetic amusement, as Dryden does. There seems to be little reason to doubt that they are altogether original with Dryden.<sup>34</sup>

The sympathy with which Dryden treats these characters deserves more notice. We are intended to laugh at Lady Dupe's hypocrisy and at Lord Dartmouth's incongruous mixture of sensuality and romantic diction,<sup>35</sup> but they achieve their ends and the bastard child is fathered by the fool Sir John Swallow. In fact, a too great insistence on chastity is here seen to be a much more punishable foible than downright immorality, as in Restoration comedy as a whole.

Characters like those in Dryden's subplot appear often in

<sup>34</sup> Hartmann (*op. cit.*, p. 16) claims that Lady Dupe is influenced by *Tartuffe*, but the only resemblance seems to be that both are hypocrites. He makes the same claim with reference to Mrs. Saintly of *Mr. Limberham*. See p. 203, n. 144.

<sup>35</sup> The reminiscences of romantic language in Lord Dartmouth's speeches to Mrs. Christian in Act II, Scene 1, are made less effective by being set up by Scott and Saintsbury as prose. In the first edition the fact that they were blank verse was not disguised. They read there as follows

"Lord.

Thus would I sacrifice my life and fortunes,  
And in return you cruelly destroy me.

"Christian.

I never meant you any harm, not I.

"Lord.

Then what does this white enemy so near me?  
(*Touching her hand gloved*)  
Sure 'tis your champion and you arm it thus  
To bid defiance to me.

"Christian:

Nay, fye my Lord, in faith you are to blame.  
(*Pulling her hand away*) "

Later Lord Dartmouth adds

"I fear you bear some Spells and Charms about you,  
And, Madam, that's against the Laws of Arms "

Saintsbury (*Works*, III, 25, n.) admits that there are odds and ends of blank verse in the play, but says that "in comedy and considering that they are never continuous, it seemed better not to print them as such." Montague Summers (*op. cit.*, Vol. I) also prints the scene as prose.

later Restoration comedy.<sup>36</sup> The portion of *Sir Martin Mar-all* which had the most effect on the later work of Dryden himself, however, was not the subplot which he originated, but the farce which he took from *L'Étourdi*. This has already been shown to be imitated in the character of Benito of *The Assignation*, and, as Hartmann says,<sup>37</sup> a scene from the Molièresque portion of *Sir Martin Mar-all* seems to have suggested a like scene in *Love Triumphant*. In the former play Sir Martin attempts to pass as the illegitimate son of old Moody newly returned from the East Indies, but gives everything away by his overacting of the part.<sup>38</sup> In the latter play Sancho tries in the same way to make Lopez believe that he is his daughter's fiancé, but fails for the same reason.<sup>39</sup> As Hartmann has shown,<sup>40</sup> the characters of Sir Martin and Sancho are strikingly alike, not only in this scene, but throughout the play.<sup>41</sup>

To sum up, Dryden has combined two plots in *Sir Martin Mar-all*. The principal plot, though it followed Quinault's *L'Amant indiscret* and Molière's *L'Étourdi*, was modified by

<sup>36</sup> The pretendedly chaste Lucy who blackmails Justice Gripe in Wycherley's *Love in a Wood* is very much like Mrs Christian Mrs Martha's marriage with the would-be Dapperwit in the same play after she is "six months gone with child" parallels Mrs Christian's marriage closely. In many plays fools were punished for their folly with supposedly chaste, but really sexually experienced, wives. Sir Positive At-all of Shadwell's *Sullen Lovers* (written only one year after Dryden's play) is one fool so treated. Clodpate of *Epsom Wells* is another.

<sup>37</sup> *Op cit*, p. 10.

<sup>38</sup> *Sir Martin Mar-all*, V, 1.

<sup>39</sup> *Love Triumphant*, III, 2.

<sup>40</sup> *Op cit*, p. 10.

<sup>41</sup> One small borrowing which is mentioned by Langbaine has not been referred to here. It is the "frolic of the altitudes," by which old Moody and Sir John are deceived at the end. As Langbaine points out (*op cit*, p. 170), it is taken from Act IV, Scene 1, of Schackelley Marmion's *Fine Companion*, a comedy which appeared in 1633. Montague Summers (*op cit*, II, 77) gives a résumé of the scene from Marmion.

being given a new ending. It seems likely that this new ending suggested the slight modifications in some of the principal characters, though it must be admitted that the reverse may be true: the changes in the characters may have brought about the new ending. Dryden also added the character of Moody to this plot. The other plot was entirely Dryden's creation, and is the best example of his realistic low comedy.

## II

In the purely comic part of *Amphitryon* (1690) Dryden was no more successful than he had been in *Sir Martin Mar-all* (1667). If there is any evidence of artistic growth to be revealed by a comparison between the earlier adaptation and the later one, it lies in the presence in *Amphitryon* of romantic passages of a degree of seriousness that Dryden did not attempt elsewhere in his comedies. These passages, which occur in the scenes in which Jupiter and Alcmena appear, will be discussed.

The relation of Dryden's *Amphitryon* to its sources has naturally received more attention from critics than have those of most of his comedies. Both Genest<sup>42</sup> and Sir Walter Scott<sup>43</sup> give Plautus and Molière as the sources, but without indicating what portion of the comedy is from Plautus and what from Molière. Harvey-Jellie has written on the sources, too, but he is most careless in pointing out what Dryden used, and even makes the statement that none of the play is from Plautus.<sup>44</sup> Charlanne<sup>45</sup> merely quotes Scott. Saints-

<sup>42</sup> *Op cit*, I, 490

<sup>43</sup> *Works*, VIII, 1.

<sup>44</sup> *Op cit*, p. 97 Harvey-Jellie seems to be an exaggerated francophile. He always overemphasizes the importance of French sources of English drama. It is perhaps significant that he is an Englishman, who wrote his dissertation for a French university

<sup>45</sup> *Op cit.*, pp. 285-287.

bury makes the vague statement that "to speak of Dryden's play as a mere adaptation of Molière's, as both French and German writers not uncommonly do, is an entire mistake."<sup>46</sup> The only treatment which shows clearly what Dryden used from Molière is that of Hartmann.<sup>47</sup> The parallel passages of Dryden and Molière which Hartmann gives have few omissions in them. He has not, however, discussed the non-Molièresque part of the play.<sup>48</sup>

Since Harvey-Jellie's Appendix,<sup>49</sup> which attempts to give a résumé of Dryden's use of his sources, is inaccurate, I have made an examination for myself, the results of which are given at the end of this volume.<sup>50</sup> These results prove that Dryden's own statement that half the play was his own<sup>51</sup> was not much exaggerated, but that his mention of Molière and Plautus side by side as if they had influenced him equally gave a false impression, since only about two per cent of the play contains material from Plautus, whereas nearly fifty per cent of it is from Molière.

The most interesting part of the study of the play is the

<sup>46</sup> *Works*, VIII, 4-5

<sup>47</sup> *Op cit*, pp 30-39

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid* A L Bondurant *The Sewanee Review*, XXXIII (1925), 455-468, has discussed certain relationships between the three plays called *Amphitryon*, by Plautus, by Molière, and by Dryden, but he has not been especially interested in comparing the influence of Plautus on Dryden with that of Molière. Bondurant's article is an interesting one, but he betrays a lack of acquaintance with the existing scholarship on Dryden's play. He refers, for instance, to the challenge which Mercury makes to Judge Gripius in Act V as Dryden's own, though Hartmann (*ibid*, p 38) had shown that it was imitated from a second play of Molière, *Le Mariage forcé*.

<sup>49</sup> *Op cit*, Appendix X, p 151. Though this Appendix ignores Plautus' contribution and magnifies that of Molière, Nicoll refers the readers of his *History of Restoration Drama* (p 175 n 5) to it.

<sup>50</sup> See my Appendixes E and F. In the first, I have shown by the use of parallel passages what Dryden took from Plautus, which was very little. In the second, I have given a résumé of Dryden's play, scene by scene, showing what portion of each scene is Dryden's, what Molière's, and what Plautus'.

<sup>51</sup> Dedication to *Amphitryon*, *Works*, VIII, 9.

examination of the kind of additions and modifications Dryden made. It may be that one of the reasons he chose Molière's *Amphitryon* for an adaptation was that he found in it material for the kind of contrast between two groups of characters that he had been making for years in his own tragicomedies.<sup>52</sup> This contrast was not so pronounced in Molière as Dryden was to make it, but it was there.

The contrast referred to is that between the poetic passion of Jupiter for Alcmena on the one hand, and Mercury's lack of appetite for Bromia on the other. As has been said, he found this suggested in Molière, and its presence in the French play was not accidental; in fact, it is carefully managed by the French dramatist, even to the extent of paralleling Jupiter's insistence on being cherished as a lover rather than as a husband<sup>53</sup> with Mercure's ignoble demand for "moins d'honneur, et plus de repos."<sup>54</sup> Molière's contrast between Amphitryon's discomfiture at being told by Alcène that he had shared the nuptial couch with her the night before, when he had not been at home,<sup>55</sup> and Sosie's relief upon being told by Cléanthis that *he* had not<sup>56</sup> should also be mentioned.

In Molière the Alcène-Jupiter and the Mercure-Sosie situations, however, merely reveal two different kinds of comic incongruity. Dryden increased the nobility of the first group of characters and made their interrelations much more romantic and poetic than they had been<sup>57</sup> and vulgarized the second group. That is, he heightened the antithetical qualities of

<sup>52</sup> Dryden's *Amphitryon* appeared in the same year (1680) that *Don Sebastian* did. It should be made clear that Dryden's *Amphitryon* is not a two-plot tragicomedy, the separation between plots is not great enough for that.

<sup>53</sup> Molière's *Amphitryon*, I, 3.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 4.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 2.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 3.

<sup>57</sup> These characters had, of course, spoken poetical language in Molière. See the quotation from Molière at the end of this chapter.



the two groups because he wanted them to "set off each other."

In the nobler part of Dryden's *Amphitryon* are to be found passages of the finest blank verse he wrote except in *All for Love*; like it, they seem to indicate Dryden's new responsiveness to Shakespeare's influence. In Act II, Scene 2, for instance, Jupiter and Alcmena come upon the stage, apparently from the nuptial chamber; Jupiter in the guise of Amphitryon declares that he must return to his army. For a few lines Dryden translates Molière. Then he interpolates the following:

*Alcmena:*

So long an absence, and so short a stay!  
What, but one night! one night of joy and love  
Could only pay one night of cares and fears,  
And all the rest are an uncanceled sum! —  
Curse on this honour, and this public fame;  
Would you had less of both, and more of love!

This bit of rhetoric is raised much above anything in Molière. And a few lines farther on Dryden becomes romantic in an Elizabethan manner:

*Jupiter:*

Behold the ruddy streaks o'er yonder hill;  
Those are the blushes of the breaking morn,  
That kindle daylight to this nether world.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> This description is certainly reminiscent of many passages by which Elizabethan dramatists indicated the dawn, for instance, the passage in *Hamlet*, I, 1:

"But look, the dawn in russet mantle clad  
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill"

and the effect of the whole passage here quoted is similar to that of *Romeo and Juliet*, III, 5, where the two lovers are arguing whether or not it is time for them to part.

*Alcmena:*

No matter for the day; it was but made  
To number out the hours of busy men.  
Let them be busy still, and still be wretched,  
And take their fill of anxious drudging day;  
But you and I will draw our curtains close,  
Extinguish daylight, and put out the sun.  
Come back, my lord; in faith you shall retire;  
You have not yet lain long enough in bed,  
To warm your widowed side.<sup>59</sup>

In other places the dialogue between Jupiter and Alcmena is heightened even beyond this — toward the heroic style. Later in Act II, Scene 2, we find:

*Alcmena:*

Ye niggard gods! you make our lives too long;  
You fill them with diseases, wants, and woes,  
And only dash them with a little love,  
Sprinkled by fits, and with a sparing hand:  
Count all our joys, from childhood even to age,  
They would but make a day of every year.  
Take back your seventy years, the stint of life,  
Or else be kind, and cram the quintessence  
Of seventy years into sweet seventy days;  
For all the rest is flat, insipid being.<sup>60</sup>

Here Dryden returns to Molière.

It is often by the mere addition of poetic figures of speech to Molière, who is notably devoid of figures, that Dryden achieves the effect he wants. For instance, in Act II, Scene 6, Molière represents Alcmène as replying to Jupiter's plea that she remain with him instead of leaving:

Non, avec l'auteur de ma peine  
Je ne puis de tout demeurer.

<sup>59</sup> Dryden's *Amphitryon*, II, 2.

<sup>60</sup> This sort of philosophizing was especially characteristic of Dryden in his heroic plays. Compare the lines quoted with, for instance, the famous "Life"

Dryden has her say:

No, I would fly thee to the ridge of earth,  
And leap the precipice, to scape thy sight.<sup>61</sup>

The speeches which follow this quotation contain many examples of Dryden's addition of poetically heightening metaphors. In my Appendix F it was necessary to credit all but one page of these speeches to Molière, in spite of the way in which Dryden had changed their spirit, which shows that a mathematical evaluation of influence cannot be completely accurate.

One more example will reveal what pains Dryden took to add splendor to Jupiter. In Molière's prologue *Mercure* asks the character *La Nuit*:

Que vos chevaux par vous au petit pas réduits,  
Pour satisfaire aux vœux de son ame amoureuse,  
D'une nuit si délicieuse  
Fassent la plus longue des nuits; . . .

Dryden represents Jupiter himself as saying:

Now, I will have a night for love and me;  
A long luxurious night, fit for a god  
To quench and empty his immortal heat.<sup>62</sup>

On the other hand, Dryden exaggerated Mercury, Sosia, Bromia, and the characters which he added to their part of the intrigue in the other direction as a foil for the romantic characters, and made them as coarse, worldly, and anti-romantic as possible. They are so much more vulgar in Dryden than they had been in Molière<sup>63</sup> that no one after

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passage in *Aureng-Zebe*, IV, 1, beginning "When I consider life, 'tis all a cheat."

<sup>61</sup> Dryden's *Amphitryon*, IV, 1.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, I, 1

<sup>63</sup> Brander Matthews, *Molière and His Works*, p. 236, in discussing Molière's *Amphitryon*, registers something more than the usual irritation of a

reading this part of the two plays could for a moment be uncertain which was Dryden's and which Molière's. The French dramatist's Sosie objects to Mercure's usurpation of his form and appearance and begs to be allowed to continue to exist in the following words:

O cœur barbare et tyrannique!  
Souffre qu'au moins je sois ton ombre.<sup>64</sup>

Dryden adapts it thus:

Ah! Then let me be your bastard brother, and the son of a whore;  
I hope that's reasonable.<sup>65</sup>

Again, when Sosie first appears, Molière represents him as philosophizing about the lot of serving men:

Notre sort est beaucoup plus rude  
Chez les grands que chez les petits.  
Ils veulent que pour eux tout soit, dans la nature,  
Obligé de s'immoler.  
Jour et nuit, grêle, vent, péril, chaleur, froidure,  
Dès qu'ils parlent, il faut voler.<sup>66</sup>

Dryden has it:

Well, the greatest plague of a serving-man is to be hired to some great lord! They care not what drudgery they put upon us, while they lie lolling at their ease, and stretch their lazy limbs in expectation of the whore which we are fetching for them.<sup>67</sup>

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student of Molière at Restoration modifications in the great dramatist's lines when he observes, "In none of [his plays] . . . does Dryden surrender more subserviently to the depravity of Restoration audiences than he did when he wrote his *Amphitryon*." Professor Matthews does not discuss in detail the changes Dryden made, and, of course, he says nothing about the contrast between the noble and the low characters.

<sup>64</sup> Molière's *Amphitryon*, III, 7.

<sup>65</sup> Dryden's *Amphitryon*, IV, 1.

<sup>66</sup> Molière's *Amphitryon*, I, 1.

<sup>67</sup> Dryden's *Amphitryon*, II, 1.

In short, Dryden's modifications in his source make the contrast between Jupiter and Sosia effective in much the same way as had been the contrast between Philocles and Celadon of *The Maiden Queen*, or Torrismond and Lorenzo of *The Spanish Friar*.

It must be admitted, however, that certain of Dryden's additions cannot be explained by his desire to contrast the noble and the low characters. No dramatic problem is solved by giving Mercury the power, by virtue of being a god, to view Phaedra naked through her clothes,<sup>68</sup> and Dryden's punning treatment of the machinery of sex<sup>69</sup> likewise serves no dramatic purpose.

Sosia's speech which closes the play seems to have been written, too, to please the Restoration audience, rather than to be in character. Molière has Sosie observe, apropos of the discovery that Jupiter has been taking Amphitryon's place in Alcène's bed:

Sur telles affaires, toujours  
Le meilleur est de ne rien dire.<sup>70</sup>

The passage becomes in Dryden:

For let the wicked world say what they please,  
The fair wife makes her husband live at ease:  
The lover keeps him too, and but receives,  
Like Jove, the remnants that Amphitryon leaves.  
'Tis true, the lady has enough in store,  
To satisfy these two, and eke two more.  
In fine, the man, who weighs the matter fully,  
Would rather be the cuckold than the cully.<sup>71</sup>

This sentiment sounds much too sophisticated for Sosia as his character is developed elsewhere even in Dryden's play

<sup>68</sup> Dryden's *Amphitryon*, II, 2.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, III, 1

<sup>70</sup> Molière's *Amphitryon*, III, 11.

<sup>71</sup> Dryden's *Amphitryon*, V, 1.

Dryden also changed Molière's play by his addition of the characters of Phaedra and Judge Gripus. As has been noted, the sordidness of their intrigue forms one of the contrasts with the part of the play in which Jupiter and Alcmena appear; but though Phaedra is, taken altogether, a low comedy character, there are contradictions which make her extremely hard to classify. The vulgarity of her conversations with Sosia and Mercury and her readiness to sell herself to the highest bidder remind us of Mrs Christian of *Sir Martin Mar-all*, or Dalinda, the impudent baggage of *Love Triumphant*, until we recall the wit of her "proviso" speech with Mercury in Act V, or some of her comments on the passion of the supposed Amphytrion in Act I. All in all, she is a gross jilt with only flashes of grace, but considering that at the time she was produced Dryden had not created a truly witty character for eighteen years — since *The Assignation* — these flashes are interesting. They indicate that it was not because Dryden had lost the knack of producing it that he turned away from high comedy. Her "proviso" speech in the last scene of the play is particularly good:

*Phaedra*: [to *Gripus*] Begin, begin — Heads of articles to be made, etc betwixt Mercury, god of thieves —

*Mercury*: And Phaedra, queen of gipsies. — *Imprimis*, I promise to buy and settle upon her an estate, containing nine thousand acres of land, in any part of Boetia to her own liking

*Phaedra*: Provided always, that no part of the said nine thousand acres shall be upon, or adjoining to, Mount Parnassus; for I will not be fobbed off with a poetical estate.

*Mercury* *Memorandum*, that she be always constant to me, and admit of no other lover.

*Phaedra*: *Memorandum*, unless it be a lover that offers more; and that the constancy shall not exceed the settlement.

*Mercury*: *Item*, that she shall keep no male servants in her house:

*Item*, no rival lap-dog for a bedfellow: *Item*, that she shall never pray to any of the gods. . . .

*Phaedra*: Oh, what had I forgot? there's pin-money, and alimony, and separate maintenance, and a thousand things more to be considered, that are all to be tacked to this act of settlement.<sup>72</sup>

Gripus has so little to do in the play that one wonders whether Dryden's reason for introducing him was altogether a dramatic one. When he does appear he is certainly meant as a satirical picture of a dishonest judge, particularly in Act V, where the lack of a bribe from either of the disputants confuses and disconcerts him. When in the last scene of the play *Phaedra* calls Gripus "Thou seller of other people: thou weathercock or government; that, when the wind blows for the subject, pointest to privilege; and when it changest for the sovereign, veerest to prerogative," Scott suggests in a footnote<sup>73</sup> that this passage may refer to any one of several judges who "domineered over the unfortunate victims who suffered for the Popish Plot," and mentions Scroggs particularly. Nothing in Gripus' character, however, points to Scroggs any more than to many others of his fellow-judges.

Neither Scott nor any other critic seems to have been interested in the possibility that certain references to Jupiter in the play might have an application to Charles II or James II. Certainly during the period following the Restoration kings did have rights with other men's wives that were not given to all, and there can be little doubt that when Jupiter argued with Phoebus in Act I, Scene 1, about whether or not a king is bound by the moral laws which apply to common men, some

<sup>72</sup> Miss Lynch in "D'Urfé's *L'Astrée* and the 'Proviso' Scenes in Dryden's Comedy," *Philological Quarterly*, IV (1925), 302-308, has discussed the relation of this "proviso" speech to a like speech in D'Urfé's romance on the one hand and to Congreve's "provisos" on the other. See pp 92-93.

<sup>73</sup> *Works*, VIII, 95.

of the Restoration audience must have thought of Jupiter as Charles and of Phoebus as some puritanical councilor. It is often claimed that in Molière's play *Amphitryon* stood for the Marquis de Montespan, who was showing considerable pique because of the attentions Louis XIV was paying his wife. The famous jealousy which, Gramont relates, Lord Chesterfield felt when James II, then Duke of York, was making advances toward Lady Chesterfield, or the intrigue between the Duke of York and Lady Southesk, also related by Gramont, might well have occurred to the audience when they saw Dryden's comedy. The latter intrigue would have been perhaps most likely to be remembered by them, since in that instance the Duke had been surprised by Lord Southesk much as Jupiter was, while Talbot had played the same part as Mercury.<sup>74</sup>

That Dryden had the past reigns of Charles or James in mind when he generalized, as he often did in *Amphitryon*, on the fact that being cuckolded by a monarch was no disgrace, is indicated by the epilogue to the comedy. Phaedra speaks it:

I'm thinking, (and it almost makes me mad,)  
How sweet a time those heathen ladies had. . . .  
Cupid was chief of all the deities,  
And love was all the fashion in the skies. . . .  
When the sweet nymph held up the lily hand,  
Jove was her humble servant at command;  
The treasury of heaven was ne'er so bare,  
But still there was a pension for the fair.  
In all his reign, adultery was no sin;  
For Jove the good example did begin. . . .<sup>75</sup>

<sup>74</sup> *Mémoires de Gramont*, p. 117

<sup>75</sup> The same idea is expressed in Act V, Scene 1, where Jupiter looks down from his chariot on *Amphitryon* and *Alcmena* and says.

"Disgrace, and Infamy, are turned to boast;  
No fame, in Jove's concurrence, can be lost:  
What he enjoys, he sanctifies from vice,  
And, by partaking, stamps into a price"



Obviously, Dryden is here sighing for the good old times. And the meaning of lines which come later in the epilogue is unmistakable:

You tease your cuckolds, to their face torment 'em;  
But Jove gave his new honors to content 'em,  
And, in the kind remembrance of the fair,  
On each exalted son bestowed a star . . .

There follows a passage which concerns only Jupiter and not the English kings, but the four lines just quoted must refer to Charles' practice of ennobling his bastard children. The last lines of the epilogue, too, appear to refer to the change which took place at the Revolution:

Severity of life did next begin;  
And always does, when we can no more sin.  
That doctrine, too, so hard in practice lies,  
That the next age may see another rise.  
Then pagan gods may once again succeed: <sup>76</sup>  
And Jove, or Mars, be ready, at our need,  
To get young godlings; and so mend our breed.

The discussion of the changes Dryden made in what he borrowed from Molière in *Amphitryon* may have obscured the truth that in long passages of the play Dryden follows his source very closely. No play of Dryden's, in fact, is so little his own as *Amphitryon*. Hartmann, in his dissertation on Molière's influence on Dryden,<sup>77</sup> gives ten large pages of parallel passages in fine print, and these show how much Dryden took over with little or no change from the French play. I shall give only one sample to show how heavily Dryden leaned on Molière.

<sup>76</sup> Is not Dryden here expressing a wish, jocose though it be, for the restoration of James?

<sup>77</sup> *Op cit.*, pp. 30-39.

Amphitryon has just returned from battle, to find that Alcmena claims that he had returned twenty-four hours earlier:

Dryden's *Amphitryon*, III, 1

*Alcmena:*

Did not my soul even sparkle  
at my eyes,  
And shoot itself into your  
much-loved bosom?  
Did I not tremble with excess  
of joy?  
Nay, agonize with pleasure at  
your sight,  
With such inimitable proofs of  
passion,  
As no false love could feign?

*Amphitryon:*

What's this you tell me?

*Alcmena:*

Far short of truth, by heaven!  
And you returned those proofs  
with usury;  
And left me with a sigh, at  
break of day.  
Have you forgot?

*Amphitryon:*

Or have you dreamt, Alcmena?  
Perhaps some kind, revealing  
deity  
Has whispered, in your sleep,  
the pleasing news  
Of my return, and you be-  
lieved it real;

Molière's *Amphitryon*, II, 2

*Alcmène:*

Ne fis-je pas éclater à vos yeux  
Les soudains mouvements  
d'une entière allégresse?  
Et le transport d'un coeur  
peut-il s'expliquer mieux,  
Au retour d'un époux qu'on  
aime avec tendresse?

*Amphitryon:*

Que me dites-vous là?

*Alcmène:*

Que même votre amour  
Montra de mon accueil une  
joie incroyable;  
Et que, m'ayant quittée à la  
pointe du jour,  
Je ne vois pas qu'à ce soudain  
retour  
Ma surprise soit si coupable.

*Amphitryon:*

Est-ce que du retour que j'ai  
précipité  
Un songe, cette nuit, Alcmène,  
dans votre âme  
A prévenu la vérité?  
Et que, m'ayant peut-être en  
dormant bien traité,

Perhaps, too, in your dream, you used me kindly; And my preventing image reaped the joys You meant, awake, to me.	Votre cœur se croit vers ma flamme Assez amplement acquitté?
---	--

<i>Alcmena:</i> Some melancholy vapour, sure, has seized Your brain, Amphitryon, and disturbed your sense: Or yesternight is not so long a time, But yet you might remember; and not force An honest blush into my glow- ing cheeks, For that which lawful mar- riage makes no crime.	<i>Alcmène:</i> Est-ce qu'une vapeur, par sa malignité, Amphitryon, a, dans votre âme, Du retour d'hier au soir brouillé la vérité? Et, que du doux accueil duquel je m'acquittai, Votre cœur prétend à ma flamme Ravir toute l'honnêteté?
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<i>Amphitryon:</i> I thank you for my melancholy vapour.	<i>Amphitryon:</i> Cette vapeur, dont vous me regalez, Est un peu, ce me semble, étrange.
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<i>Alcmena:</i> 'Tis but a just requital for my dream.	<i>Alcmène:</i> C'est ce qu'on peut donner pour change Au songe dont vous me parlez.
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### III

As has been pointed out, Dryden's two adaptations of Molière, though they were written twenty-three years apart, do not reveal important evidences of artistic growth in their creator. For both, Dryden chose plays which were less at variance with English tastes than Molière's thesis plays would

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have been. In both he added the customary amount of Restoration grossness to the characters which he took over and added new low-comedy characters. In *Amphitryon* he carefully contrasted the low-comedy characters thus produced with the nobler characters of the play — as he had done before in his two-plot tragicomedies.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS

#### I

DRYDEN'S only consistent principle in writing his comedies is seen in this study to be a desire to please his audiences. As he repeated often in his prefaces, his problem was not to decide what expression of the comic was intrinsically best, but what would delight the age. To do this he was ever ready to change his methods and to follow the slightest shifting of the wind.

This responsiveness to public inclination appears when his comic productions are compared. In many respects *The Wild Gallant* was a continuation of the kind — or rather kinds — of comedy that had been written by the two comic dramatists who were most appreciated at the Restoration, Jonson and Fletcher. *The Rival-Ladies* was strongly influenced by a recent dramatic success of an entirely different sort, Sir Samuel Tuke's *Adventures of Five Hours*. *The Maiden Queen* in the kind of contrast developed between its two plots was probably suggested by *Love in a Tub*, and some of each of its plots was taken from popular romances. At times Dryden imitated his own successes, as he did when he continued the witty lovers of *The Maiden Queen* in *The Mock Astrologer* and *Marriage à la Mode*. But one failure, *The Assignation*, was enough to cause him to discontinue them, and in his next play, *Mr. Limberham*, we find him attempting a very different type of comic appeal — one that would please the audiences that had been applauding the dramas of D'Urfey and Behn.

There are evidences that this shifting with the wind was purposefully planned. Dryden made up his mind early that his comedies were much less important from a literary point of view than his serious plays or his poetry, and that if he was to make a lasting literary reputation it would not be as a comic dramatist. He is careful to make this clear. In *A Defence of an Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, for instance, he says:

. . . I confess my chief endeavours [in comedy] are to delight the age in which I live. If the humour of this be for low comedy, small accidents, and raillery, I will force my genius to obey it, though with more reputation I could write in verse.

In his second play, *The Rival-Ladies*, to give one more example, Dryden represents the prologue as explaining the faults of the play by saying that the author was trying to write not great, but successful comedy, and adding:

He's bound to please, not to write well; and knows,  
There is a mode in plays as well as clothes.

Dryden, then, knew that he was writing for an age, not for all time, and it must be remembered that this age encouraged him to go on as he had begun. Pepys, who thought *A Midsummer Night's Dream* "the most insipid, ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life," was enthusiastic about *Sir Martin Mar-all* and *The Maiden Queen*. It should be noted, too, that Dryden's audiences judged each play separately. Later critics, on the other hand, have been disposed to judge the comedies as a whole, and to be disappointed by the fact that their cumulative effect is not great. They have considered them a literary heritage, an attitude Dryden and his contemporaries never took toward them.

## II

In addition to varying his comedies as the fashion changed from year to year, Dryden showed a tendency to appeal within the separate plays to divers tastes. So many of the comedies have at least two plots that it seems likely that their use illustrates one of his principles of dramatic composition. The two plots of the tragicomedies, in which the contrasts between the two sets of characters are heightened for dramatic effect, have been discussed in Chapter III. But the desire to have two strings to his bow is seen also in many of the comedies. *The Wild Gallant* has two groups of characters which make different appeals, though it is possible that the same man might like both the Jonsonian and the Fletcherian groups. *Sir Martin Mar-all* has an underplot which adds variety to the play. *The Mock Astrologer* and *The Assignment* are each made up of two groups of characters taken from different sources. Dryden realized that he was violating the most important of the unities by so building his comedies, but he continued to do it because he felt that his audiences wanted him to. He felt that such plays were "sympathetic to the English genius."

One reason for the combination of plots in some comedies and of heterogeneous characters in others was apparently Dryden's lack of confidence in himself as a writer of comedy. This feeling led him to try to compensate for what he considered poor dialogue and incident by mere bustle and change. There does not seem to have been sufficient cause for this lack of self-confidence — certainly there was not when he was at his best — but there is no doubt that he felt it. Passages like the one in *A Defence of an Essay of Dramatic Poesy* are frequent: "I know I am not . . . fitted by nature to write comedy. I want that gayety of humour which is required to

it." And later, after he had deserted the gay comedy of repartee and devoted himself to intrigue and farce, he still continued to protest, in the preface to his last play, that comedy was not his forte.

### III

Dryden's lack of confidence in his ability as a comic dramatist and his habit of compensating for it by variety of plot and character make his practice of borrowing material from earlier plays and novels not very surprising. Such a feeling would suggest the use of things which had already succeeded, even if the too great difficulty of providing two or more original plots for each play had not done so.

He was quite ready to borrow anything that would serve his turn. During the early part of his career, moreover, he seemed quite willing that his debts be discovered. If he had not been, he would not have used romances so familiar as were those of Mlle de Scudéry, plays so famous as those of Molière, or a novel so likely to be discovered as *The Annals of Love*, which had lately appeared when he used it in *The Assignment*.

After the appearance of Langbaine's attack in *Momus Triumphans* in 1688, Dryden apparently felt that he must change his tactics. Thereafter he was careful either to mention and defend his use of his sources (as he did in the serious part of *Don Sebastian* and in that of *Amphitryon*) or to change them so much as to conceal them (as he apparently tried to do with the comic part of *Don Sebastian*). It seems possible that the lack of any discovery of the source of the comic part of Dryden's love play, *Love Triumphant*, is due to careful disguise or to the use of obscure material. At least the discovery that it was incontrovertibly original would be more surprising than would be proof that it was borrowed. It is probably safe



to say that in his comedies Dryden never created what he could borrow.

The explanation and the defense of this truth have taken up a large part of this book. Such detailed argument as has been prepared would not be necessary were the thesis not in direct contradiction to the attitude of Scott and Saintsbury, Dryden's two distinguished editors, who emphasize Dryden's originality rather than his dependence on his sources. They even refuse most of the time to check up on Langbaine. And Montague Summers in his recent edition of Dryden's dramatic works has not done so often enough or thoroughly enough to modify substantially the impression a student of Dryden gets from Scott and Saintsbury.

Perhaps a summary of the borrowings of plots and dialogue in Dryden's comedies and in the comic plots of his tragicomedies should be given. The following summary does not indicate his uses of the spirit or method of other productions, such as his imitation of Jonsonian humours in *The Wild Gallant* or of low intrigue in *Mr. Limberham*, but only the material borrowings that have been demonstrated: *The Wild Gallant* contained only unimportant bits taken from earlier works, but *The Rival-Ladies* is indebted to Scarron's *Roman comique* and to Petronius Arbiter. *The Maiden Queen* drew from Mlle de Scudéry's *Le Grand Cyrus* and her *Ibrahim*. *Sir Martin Mar-all* drew from Quinault's *L'Amant indiscret*, and from Molière's *L'Étourdi*; *The Mock Astrologer* from Thomas Corneille's *Le Feint Astrologue* and, to a lesser extent, from Molière's *Le Dépit amoureux*. *The Assignment* borrowed from Scarron's *Roman comique* and from *The Annals of Love*. *The Spanish Friar* took material from Bremond's *Le Pelerin*. *Amphitryon* took material from plays of the same name by Molière and Plautus. *Don Sebastian* used a pair of situations, rather carefully disguised, from *Le*

*Pelerin*. Only *The Wild Gallant*, *Mr. Limberham*, and the comic plots of *Marriage à la Mode* and *Love Triumphant* contain — so far as critics have been able to discover — no important amounts of borrowed material.

In borrowing widely Dryden was, of course, doing as many of his contemporaries had done, and after him the habit of borrowing became so much a matter of course that some playwrights made little pretense of being more than combiners of other men's work. As Pope said in Book I of *The Dunciad* (ll. 283-286) :

Small thanks to France and none to Rome or Greece  
A vast, vamped, future, old, revived, new piece,  
'Twixt Plautus, Fletcher, Shakespear, and Corneille,  
Can make a Cibber, Tibbald, or Ozell.

#### IV

Dryden's use of the work of others is frequent and striking; his change in what he borrowed is equally interesting. He never forgot the taste of his audience, and, though he pleased them when he could by borrowing the kind of material that would not have to be changed, his modifications were many.

This fact has been abundantly illustrated in the preceding study. What Dryden took, for instance, from Scarron and Petronius Arbiter for use in *The Rival-Ladies* and what he took from Mlle de Scudéry for use in the serious plot of *Marriage à la Mode* he refashioned in the "heroic" spirit. This way of molding his material pleased one element in Restoration taste. Other changes he made for different reasons. He modified the raillery of several characters in French romances by increasing the degree of emancipation shown in the woman's part, and by making both sides of the dialogue more shameless and suggestive than they had been, so that it came

from his pen as Restoration repartee. He added traces of Restoration affectation to Sir Martin Mar-all's French foolishness. But examples are found in almost every play. Dryden was nearly always a careful adapter, almost never a lazy plagiarist. His comedies, therefore, are still his own.

## V

One example of Dryden's desire to give the public what it wanted was his willingness to include suggestive and pornographic dialogue in his plays. The effect of this practice was enhanced by its negation of the discredited ideals of the late Puritan régime. It also contrasted strikingly with the "heroic" tone of the serious portion of the two-plot plays. Dryden seems to have forced himself to please in this way with alacrity. When he produced his most indecent passages it was not apparent that he was writing "in pain," as he claimed he was in the prologue to *The Mock Astrologer*. If it is true that he was first led to be obscene by the example of others, it must be admitted that in this course he seldom allowed himself to be outdone. We expect more or less impudicity in plays like *Mr. Limberham*, where the subject is fornication; but we find it also in the "high" comedy of *Marriage à la Mode*. Here as elsewhere, however, it must be acknowledged that though, as Macaulay says, Dryden is worthless as a teacher of ethics, he is to be applauded as an entertainer of Restoration audiences.

## APPENDIXES



## APPENDIX A

### THE SOURCE OF THE SERIOUS PLOT OF "THE MAIDEN QUEEN"

FOR the serious plot of *The Maiden Queen* Dryden did little more than dramatize the story of *Cléobuline, Reine de Corinthe*, as it appears in Mlle de Scudéry's *Artamène ou Le Grand Cyrus*, Tome VII, Livre 2 (pp. 710-904 in the edition printed at Rouen in 1655). He made a few additions, such as the Queen's feminine caviling at Candiope's beauty (III, 1) and the petition which is presented to the Queen that she marry. He made a more important alteration by adding at the end of the play the rebellion which permits a slender connection between the comic and the tragic plots and allows a quicker and more dramatic working out of the plot than was possible in the discursive romance, but the essence of the characters is unchanged in Dryden, and the spirit of the whole serious plot is almost exactly that of the French original.

Moreover, Dryden has translated whole scenes directly from his source. His use of Mlle de Scudéry's material might be compared with Shakespeare's use of North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives* in *Antony and Cleopatra*. For, having found, as Shakespeare did, material already fitted for his use, he saw that he could take over dramatic and poetic effects as well as plot from his original, without even changing the wording any more than was necessary to turn prose to blank verse. In fact, he depends much more on his sources in *The Maiden Queen* than does Shakespeare in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Shakespeare had to enlarge on suggestions in North, and it is

to this necessity that we owe some of the finest passages in the play. Dryden, on the contrary, had only to choose from the too great luxuriance of Mlle de Scudéry. He had to exclude more than he had to add, though he did, of course, make some additions.

An idea of the extent of Dryden's debt may be given by quoting a few parallel passages from the romance and the play:

*The Maiden Queen*, I, 3

*Le Grand Cyrus* (pp. 746 ff.)

*Queen:*

That sun, who with one look  
surveys the globe,  
Sees not a wretch like me! —  
And could the world  
Take a right measure of my  
state within,  
Mankind must either pity me,  
or scorn me.

. . . si on scavoit ce qui ce  
passa dans mon cœur, on me  
regarderoit ou avec pitié, ou  
avec mépris. (p. 746)

*Asteria:*

Sure none could do the last.

Ha Madame, reprit Stésilée,  
cette dernière chose ne peut  
iamais arriver. . . . (p. 746)

*Queen:*

Thou long'st to know it,  
And I to tell thee, but shame  
stops my mouth.  
First, promise me thou wilt ex-  
cuse my folly;  
And, next, be secret.

. . . ie voudrois desia vous  
avoir dit la cause de ma dou-  
leur. mais, Stésilée, des que ie  
veux ouvrir la bouche pour  
vous la decouvrir, le despit &  
la honte me la ferment. . . .  
(p. 747)

*Asteria:*

Can you doubt it, madam?

*Queen:*

Yet you might spare my la-  
bour —  
Can you not guess?

. . . ma chère Stésilée, devinez  
si vous pouvez, une partie de  
ma douleur. (p. 748)

*Asteria:*

Madam, please you, I'll try.

*Queen:*

Hold, Asterial —

I would not have you guess; for  
should you find it,

I should imagine that some  
other might,

And then I were most  
wretched: —

Therefore, though you should  
know it, flatter me,

And say you could not guess it.

Mais non, reprenoit cette Princesse, gardez-vous bien de la deviner: & quand vous en auriez quelques soupçons, ne m'en dites rien ie vous en conjure: car si par hazard vous la deviniez, ie croirois que toute la Terre la devineroit, & ie serois la plus malheureuse Princesse du monde. . . . (p. 748)

*Asteria:*

Madam, I need not flatter you,

I cannot — and yet,

Might not ambition trouble  
your repose?

. . . ce ne peut estre tout au plus, que d'avoir quelques sentimens trop eslevez. (p. 749)

*Queen:*

My Sicily, I thank the gods,  
contents me.

But, since I must reveal it,  
know, — 'tis love:

I, who pretended so to glory,  
am

Become the slave of love.

Ha Stésilée, repliqua la Reine, l'ambition n'a point de part a mon crime. . . . Mais puis qu'il faut que ie vous die, ce que ie ne scaurois plus cacher . . . scachez Stésilée, que malgre moi, & sans que ie l'aye pu empêcher, il y a quelqu'un au Monde qui a assez de part a mon cœur, pour ne le pouvoir hair quand ie le veux. . . . (pp. 749-750)

*Asteria:*

I thought your majesty had  
framed designs

To subvert all your laws; be-  
come a tyrant,

Ie pensois, repliqua Stésilée. . . , que vostre Majesté eust dessein d'enfreindre toutes les Loix de son Estat; de



Or vex your neighbors, with  
injurious wars;  
Is this all, madam?

*Queen:*

Is not this enough?  
Then, know, I love below my-  
self; a subject;  
Love one, who loves another,  
and who knows not  
That I love him.

commencer quelque injuste  
guerre . . . & d'établir quel-  
que Gouvernement tiran-  
nique. . . . (p. 750)

Ha Stésilée, interrompit Cléo-  
buline . . . , i'aime sans estre  
aimée; i'aime sans qu'on le  
scache; & i'aime une Personne  
qui aime ailleurs (750) . . .  
i'aime un Sujet. . . . (p. 752)

Then ensue a few lines in which Dryden has followed the plot of his source, but not verbally. Later in the scene, however, he is again close to his original:

*Queen:*

. . . would he did not love  
Candiope;  
Would he loved me — but  
knew not of my love,  
Or e'er durst tell me his.

Je voudrois, dit-elle, que My-  
rinthe n'aimast plus Philimène,  
& qu'il m'aimast: mais ie  
voudrois qu'il m'aimast sans  
me le dire, & sans qu'il sceust  
iamais que ie l'aimasse. . . .  
(p. 756)

*Asteria:*

In all this labyrinth,  
I find one path, conducing to  
your quiet.

(It seems like much more of a  
labyrinth in the French story,  
since thirty pages of repetitious  
discussion of the possibilities  
inherent in the situation have  
intervened before the next  
speech.)

*Queen:*

O tell me quickly then!

*Asteria:*

Candiope, as princess of the  
blood,  
Without your approbation  
cannot marry:  
First, break his match with her,  
by virtue of  
Your sovereign authority.

Myrinthe n'épousera point  
Philimène, si vous n'y consen-  
tez. (p. 796)

*Queen:*

I fear, that were to make him  
hate me,  
Or, what's as bad, to let him  
know, I love him:  
Could you not do it of your-  
self?

Quand il ne l'épousera pas sans  
mon consentement, reprit elle,  
il est tousiours vray qu'il m'en  
haïra. . . . (p. 796)

Again in Act II, Scene 1, Dryden has followed Mlle de  
Scudéry closely:

*Philocles:*

Your goodness still prevents  
my wishes.—  
Yet I have one request,  
Might it not pass almost for  
madness, and  
Extreme ambition in me —

Si ie ne scavois Madame, luy  
dit-il, que i'ay l'honneur d'es-  
tre connu de vostre Majesté,  
i'aurois sujet de craindre qu'au  
lieu de m'accorder la très-  
humble prière que i'ay dessein  
de luy faire aujourd'hui, elle  
ne me refusast, en m'accusant  
de temerité, & d'une ambition  
démésurée. . . . (p. 783)

*Queen:*

You know you have a favorable  
judge;  
It lies in you not to ask any-  
thing  
I cannot grant.

. . . i'ai quelque peine a com-  
prendre ce que vous pouvez dé-  
sirer, qui me puisse donner  
sujet de vous accuser d'estre  
trop ambitieux. (pp. 783-784)

*Philocles:*

Madam, perhaps, you think me  
too faulty;  
But love alone inspires me  
with ambition,  
Tho' but to look on fair Can-  
diope were an excuse for  
both.

Il est pourtant vrai Madame,  
reprit Myrinthe, que . . .  
[i'ay] dessein de supplier vos-  
tre Majesté de me permettre de  
servir Philimène. . . . Mais  
Madame . . . ie vous proteste  
que l'ambition n'est point ce  
qui fait ma temerité . . . l'a-  
mour est la passion qui me pos-  
sède. . . . (pp. 784-785)

*Queen:*

Keep your ambition, and let  
love alone:

That I can cloy, but this I cannot cure.

I have some reasons (invincible to me) which must forbid

Your marriage with Candiope.

Si vous n'aviez que de l'ambition, reprit Cléobuline en rougissant, il vous seroit plus aisé d'obtenir de moy ce que vous souhaitez . . . mais de vouloir m'obliger a me mesler d'une amour, & d'une amour telle que la vostre, c'est, Myrinthe ce que ie ne scaurois faire. Diverses raisons que ie ne vous puis dire, font que ce Mariage ne me plaist pas. (p. 785)

*Philocles:*

I knew I was not worthy.

*Queen:*

Not for that, Philocles; you deserve all things,

And, to show I think it, my admiral, I hear, is dead:

His vacant place (the best in all my kingdom)

I here confer on you.

Ce n'est pas toutesfois que ie ne vous trouve digne de Philimène, et pour vous tesmoigner (adjousta-t-elle . . .) que ie ne vous refuse pas mon consentement, par un sentiment qui vous soit désavantageux, ie vous donne la plus considérable charge de mon Etat, que vous savez qui vaque depuis quelques jours. (pp. 785-786)

*Philocles:*

Rather take back all you had  
giv'n before,

Than not give this;

For believe, madam, nothing is so near

My soul, as the possession of  
Candiope.

Ha Madame, reprit Myrinthe, ordonnez moi plutost de vous rendre toutes celles que vous m'avez desia donnés, & ne me refusez pas Philimène. . . . (p. 786)

*Queen:*

Since that belief would be to  
your disadvantage,

I will not entertain it.

Comme cette croyance ne vous seroit pas avantageuse, répondit la Reine, ie ne la veux pas avoir: & ie demeuray dans les sentimens ou ie suis. (pp. 786-787)

*Philocles:*

Why, madam, can you be thus  
cruel to me?

To give me all things, which I  
did not ask,

And yet deny that only thing  
I beg:

And so beg, that I find I cannot  
live

Without the hope of it.

*Queen:*

Hope greater things;

But hope not this. Haste to  
o'ercome your love;

It is but putting a short-lived  
passion to a violent death.

*Philocles:*

I cannot live with Candiope;

But I can die, without a mur-  
mur,

Having my doom pronounced  
from your fair mouth.

. . . après m'avoir tant fait de  
graces que ie n' . . . ai pas de-  
mandés, il est en quelque façon  
estrange, que . . . [vostre Ma-  
jesté] me refuse la seule que ie  
luy demande. . . . Philimène  
est si absolument nécessaire a la  
félicité de ma vie, que ie ne  
puis vivre si vous m'ostez  
l'espérance de la posséder.  
(p. 787)

Comme l'amour n'est bien sou-  
vent qu'une passion passagère,  
reprit elle, vous oublierez peut  
estre avec le temps, la rigueur  
que je vous tiens. (For this  
Dryden goes back to page 786.  
It comes between the two  
speeches already quoted from  
that page.)

. . . ie puis sans doute ne  
l'épouser pas & mourir; mais ie  
ne puis . . . vivre sans la pos-  
séder . . . si vous me donner  
. . . [la mort] ie feray ce que ie  
pourray pour la recevoir sans  
murmurer. . . . (pp. 788-  
790) . . . si vous me dites en-  
core une fois, ie vous deffends  
de penser a Philimène, ces  
cruelles paroles . . . porteront  
infailliblement la mort . . .  
une mort . . . donnée par la  
plus Grande Reine de la Terre,  
& par une Reine pour qui i'ay  
tous les sentimens de respect  
que ie dois avoir. (pp. 790-  
791)

*Queen:*

If I am to pronounce it, live,  
my Philocles,  
But live without, (I was about  
to say

Without his love, but that I  
cannot do;) (*Aside*)

Live Philocles without Can-  
diope.

*Philocles:*

Madam, could you give me my  
doom so quickly,

And knew it was irrevocable?

'Tis too apparent,

You, who alone love glory, and  
whose soul

Is loosened from your senses,  
cannot judge

What torments mine, of grosser  
mould, endures.

Vivez (luy dit Cléobuline, sans  
scavoir presque ce qu'elle  
disoit) mais vivez sans Philo-  
mène.

Ha Madame, s'écria-t-il en sou-  
pirant, il paroist bien que vos-  
tre Majesté n'aime que la  
gloire, & ne connoist que  
l'amour de la vertu seulement,  
puis qu'elle croit qu'on chasse  
si aisement de son cœur l'ar-  
dente passion qui me possède.  
(p. 788. This part comes just  
before the third speech from  
the last in *Le Grand Cyrus*.)

The rest of the scene is Dryden's own creation, one of the best additions he made. In it the Queen tells Philocles about her love for someone beneath her; but does not tell him it is he. This addition is effective dramatically at the time, but it later makes very unconvincing Philocles' slowness to suspect that the Queen loves him.

Again, in Act IV, Scene 2, Dryden has followed Mlle de Scudéry closely. This passage is in heroic couplets:

*Philocles:*

I could my sorrows with some  
patience bear,

Did they proceed from anyone  
but her:

But from the queen! whose  
person I adore

Iugez . . . combien il me doit  
estre dur & sensible, de voir que  
la mort me soit donnée, par  
une main qui m'est chère. . . .  
(p. 806)

By duty much, by inclination  
more.

. . . elle croit bien sans doute  
que i'y suis attaché a son service  
. . . par honneur . . . cepen-  
dant il faut que ie vous die . . .  
que je le suis cent fois plus par  
inclination. (p. 805)

*Asteria:*

He is inclined already; did he  
know,  
That she loved him, how would  
his passion grow! (*Aside*)

*Philocles:*

That her fair hand with des-  
tiny combines!  
Fate ne'er strikes deep, but  
when unkindness joins:  
For, to confess the secret of my  
mind,  
Something so tender for the  
queen I find,  
That even Candiope can scarce  
remove,  
And, were she lower, I should  
call it love.

. . . j'aime la Reine avec un  
attachement si puissant, que je  
n'ay pas plus d'amour pour  
Philimène, que j'ay de ten-  
dresse pour Cléobuline. Je dis  
mesme plus . . . que si elle  
fust née un peu plus bas que le  
Throne où elle est, i'aurois  
peut-estre eu la hardiesse de  
lever les yeux iusques à elle.  
(p. 806)

*Asteria:*

She charged me not this secret  
to betray;  
But I best serve her if I dis-  
obey.  
For, if he loves, 'twas for her  
interest done;  
If not, he'll keep it secret for  
his own. (*Aside*)

. . . Quoy que Cléobuline lui  
eust dit mille & mille fois,  
qu'elle ne voudroit pas que  
Myrinthe sceust sa passion . . .  
elle croyoit pourtant que . . .  
la Reine se consoleroit de cette  
aventure. . . . (p. 807) Si  
ce que ie lui diray n'esbranle

*Philocles:*

Why are you in obliging me so slow?

*Asteria:*

The thing's of great importance, you would know;  
And you must first swear secrecy to all.

*Philocles:*

I swear.

*Asteria:*

Yet hold; your oath's too general:  
Swear that Candiope shall never know.

*Philocles:*

I swear.

*Asteria:*

No; not the queen herself.

*Philocles:*

I vow.

point sa constance, il n'aura garde pour son interest, de faire iamaïs connoistre à la Reine, qu'il a sceu qu'elle a de la passion pour lui . . . & si ce que ie luy diray luy fait quitter Philimène, & le porte à aimer Cléobuline, ie n'ay rien à craindre de sa colère. (pp. 808-809. This is only a small part of a long passage of *Le Grand Cyrus* in which Stésilée introspects.)

. . . ne deliberez plus si vous me devez accorder ce que je vous demande. Ce que vous me demandez, reprit Stésilée est de plus d'importance que vous ne pensez: & ce secret, poursuivie-elle, est de telle nature, que ie ne puis vous le confier, si vous ne me jurez solennellement, de ne le reveler iamaïs à personne, sans en excepter Philimène. (p. 810)

. . . elle voulut qu'il luy iurast qu'il ne feroit iamaïs connoistre à la Reine . . . qu'il eust sceu ce qu'elle allast dire. (p. 811)

*Asteria:*

You wonder why I am so cautious grown,  
 In telling what concerns yourself alone:  
 But spare my vow, and guess what it may be  
 That makes the queen deny Candiope:  
 'Tis neither heat, nor pride, that moves her mind;  
 Methinks the riddle is not hard to find.

*Phœocles:*

You seem so great a wonder to intend,  
 As were in me, a crime to apprehend.

*Asteria:*

'Tis not a crime to know; but would be one,  
 To prove ungrateful when your duty's known.

*Philocles:*

Why would you thus my easy faith abuse?  
 I cannot think the queen so ill would choose. . . .

. . . ie ne doute pas . . . que vous n'ayez quelque estonnement, de voir que l'apporte tant de précautions à vous dire une chose où vous pensez avoir seul interest. . . . (p. 811) Mais . . . ne scauriez-vous m'espargner la peine que i'ay, à vous dire ce que i'ay tant promis de ne dire iamais; & ne scauriez-vous deviner ce que vous voulez scavoir? Qu'il vous suffice, poursuit-elle, que ie vous die . . . que la Politique ni la haine n'ont point de part à la résolution que la Reine a prise. . . . (p. 813)

. . . ce qu'il semble que vous vouliez que i'entende . . . est si surprenant, que ie doute si ie ne fais pas un crime, de vous tesmoigner que ie l'ay entendu. (p. 814)

Non Myrinthe, reprit Stésilée, vous n'estes point criminel de m'entendre: mais vous le serez estrangement, si après m'avoir entendue, vous ne faites ce que ie suis persuadée que vous estes obligé de faire. . . . (p. 814)

. . . ie pense qu'il vaut mieux que ie . . . vous accuse mesme d'une imposture, que d'accuser la plus Grande Reine du Monde d'un si mauvais choix. (p. 814)



The rest of the scene also follows *Le Grand Cyrus*, but less closely.

Even in the scenes which Dryden added to the story bits are often taken from Mlle de Scudéry. For instance, in Act I, Scene 3, in which Philocles and Lysimantes present a petition that the queen marry, the following bit is borrowed:

*Queen:*

Shall I, — I, who was born a  
sovereign queen,  
Be barred of that, which God  
and nature gives  
The meanest slave, a freedom  
in my love?

Est-il juste, que parce que ie  
suis née sur le Throne, ie sois  
privée de la liberté qu'ont tous  
mes Sujets, & que ie sois plus  
Esclave que mes Esclaves, en  
une chose dont dépend toute  
la félicité de ma vie? (p. 861)

In the same way, in Act IV, Scene 1, in which Lysimantes decides to rebel, a scene which, as a whole, is Dryden's addition, one speech is imitated:

*Lysimantes:*

. . . Does she love Philocles,  
who loves not her;  
And loves not Lysimantes, who  
prefers her  
Above his life? — What rests,  
but that I take  
This opportunity, which she  
herself  
Has given me, to kill this happy  
rival —  
Assist me, soldiers!

. . . Cléobuline aime Myrin-  
the, qui ne l'aime point. &  
. . . elle n'aime pas Basilide,  
qui l'aime plus que sa vie. . .  
Il faut donc que ie sois son  
ennemy. . . (p. 831)

Dryden has changed Mlle de Scudéry from here on during the scene by having Lysimantes translate his idea into action, thus fitting the plot to the stage by causing it to come to a quicker conclusion than in *Le Grand Cyrus*, where Basilide thinks these thoughts but does nothing.

## APPENDIX B

### THE SOURCE OF THE SERIOUS PLOT OF "MARRIAGE À LA MODE"

THE serious plot of *Marriage à la Mode* is taken from the story of Sesostris and Timarete, Tome VI, Livre 2, of Mlle de Scudéry's *Artamène ou Le Grand Cyrus*. Dryden has not translated long passages from his source, as he had for the serious plot of *The Maiden Queen*, but his events follow Mlle de Scudéry's very closely. He has been obliged to leave out many things which the discursiveness of the romance allowed room for—a visit of the philosopher Pythagoras to the exiled prince and princess, for instance—and he has made the ending more effective for stage presentation by having Leonidas seize the kingdom forcibly from the usurper, rather than by having the usurper experience a gradual change of heart and *give* it back to him, as in the romance (p. 905). But there are few other changes. Dryden has used new names for the characters. Amasis, the usurper, he has called Polydamas; Sesostris, Leonidas; Timarete, Palmyra; Amenophis (the children's father), Eubulus; Traseas, Hermogenes; the courtier whom the usurper promised to marry to his child if it turned out to be a girl (p. 753 in Mlle de Scudéry; I, 1, in Dryden) is Heracleon in the romance, Argaleon in the play; the courtier's sister who is to marry the child if it turns out to be male is Liserine in the romance, Amalthea in the play. The characters themselves, in spite of the fact that their language is seldom translated word for word from the romance, differ less from their models than do those of *The Maiden Queen*.

The setting of the play Dryden moved from Egypt to Sicily, a change which he may have made because he felt that the pastoral atmosphere of the story was better fitted to Sicily than to Egypt. The fact that Sicily is an island about the same distance from the mainland as is England may have caused him to choose it in order to give the *comic* plot, with Palamede returning from his travels on the mainland, a sort of allegorical significance. At any rate, this change has made it necessary to omit Sesostris' heroic slaying of the crocodile.<sup>1</sup> The May day celebration that Dryden's two royal children recall later (II, 1) was suggested, however, by the shepherds' celebration of this heroic deed (Mlle de Scudéry, pp. 652-653).

Dryden's play opens after the usurper has already discovered the existence of the two then grown children, that is, after nearly two hundred pages of the romance. He has revealed the early part of the romance to his audience by having Amalthea recount it in outline to Artemis, obviously for this purpose, at the very beginning of the serious part of the drama (I, 1). This outline does not depart from Mlle de Scudéry's story in any important particular, except that Dryden has made the usurper appear less false than he had been by representing him as having seized the crown after, rather than before, the death of the king. (In Mlle de Scudéry the king was killed fighting against Amasis and his rebelling soldiers.) In order to secure unity of setting, Dryden has the two children brought to Court (I, 1) instead of having the usurper go to the island where they have been living to examine them (p. 754). He also changes Hermogenes, who had been a real shepherd (Traseas) in the romance, into a courtier disguised as a shepherd, whose true character is revealed when his

<sup>1</sup> This monster Mlle de Scudéry represented as pursuing Timarete with clashing scales, jaws oozing yellow and green foam, and nostrils emitting a thick smoke (p. 643), and being killed by Sesostris with his shepherd's crook.

peruke falls off. This change is not important, however, since Traseas of the romance talks just like a nobleman, realism in depicting members of the lower orders of society not being Mlle de Scudéry's forte.

As has been said, Dryden changed the end of the story in order to make it dramatic, as he had done in *The Maiden Queen*, and to shorten it. He had Leonidas tear the crown from the usurper's grasp instead of arranging a gradual conversion for him as had been done in the romance, and he prefaced this act by a heroic scene in which Palmyra struggled between love for parent and for lover. In the romance the story is interminable. After Sesostris has been restored, Heracleon, whose pride and envy were taken over in part by Dryden, tries to kill Sesostris and the usurper, and, failing in this, kidnaps Timarete and carries her off to Lydia. Sesostris, finding this out, joins the Egyptian army which is to assist Croesus against Cyrus in Lydia. While fighting he is wounded from behind by the cowardly Heracleon, who has entered secretly into the same army. And so the story goes on and on. I think I am right in saying that Mlle de Scudéry, becoming interested in other characters soon after the beginning of Livre 3, forgot all about Sesostris and Timarete and never revealed to her readers whether or not they were finally reunited.

Dryden's apparent care not to translate from his source, though he followed its events unusually closely, probably indicates that he was already responding to accusations of plagiarism. In some ways, too, he made additions and alterations which seem to have been calculated to bring the romance nearer to the ideal of the heroic play.

For instance, in the romance (p. 773) Sesostris is covered with confusion when he is told that he is the son of Amasis. When Dryden's Leonidas hears the same news (I, 1) he

shows, in the manner of a true hero of a heroic play, that he has always been a king at heart:

*Polydamas:*

Come near, and be not dazzled with the splendour,  
And greatness of a court.

*Leonidas:*

I need not this encouragement;  
I can fear nothing but the gods.  
And, for this glory, after I have seen  
The canopy of state spread wide above  
In the abyss of heaven, the court of stars,  
The blushing morning, and the rising sun,  
What greater can I see?

*Polydamas:*

This speaks thee born a prince; . . .

Later, when Polydamas has told Leonidas that he is expected to marry Amalthea, he refuses, and when he is asked the reason for his refusal, his reply is another example of the kind of thing Dryden added to his source (II, 1) :

Sir, ask the stars,  
Which have imposed love on us, like a fate,  
Why minds are bent to one, and fly another?

At times Dryden adds poetic images, which is natural when one is changing prose to blank verse. When Leonidas sees Argaleon following Palmyra, he says (II, 1) :

But, oh! Argaleon follows her! so night  
Treads on the footsteps of a winter's sun,  
And stalks all black behind him.

Yet Dryden has not improved the story much by such additions. In fact, he seems to have put very little time on the serious part of *Marriage à la Mode*; if it were not for the

*comic part the play would obviously be, instead of one of his best plays, one of his worst.*

One change which Dryden made, however, is more important than the others. Mlle de Scudéry makes Heracleon (Dryden's Argaleon) the moving force that brings about the discovery that the usurper's child is Timarete, not Sesostris. Dryden motivates the discovery by having Polydamas determine to set Palmyra adrift in a boat to die for the crime of being loved by Leonidas; this situation, naturally, forces Hermogenes, in order to save Palmyra's life, to reveal that it is she and not Leonidas who is Polydamas' child. The false drama in this part of the play, for which Dryden is entirely to blame, shows how badly he could "improve" on his sources. The following quotation is from Act III, Scene 1:

*Polydamas:*

Maid, come hither.  
Have you presumed so far, as to receive  
My son's affections?

*Palmyra:*

Alas, what shall I answer? To confess it  
Will raise a blush upon a virgin's face;  
Yet I was ever taught 'twas base to lie.

*Polydamas:*

You've been too bold, and you must love no more.

*Palmyra:*

Indeed I must; I cannot help my love;  
I was so tender when I took the bent,  
That now I grow that way.

*Polydamas:*

He is a prince, and you are meanly born.

*Leonidas:*

Love either finds equality, or makes it:  
Like death, he knows no difference in degrees,  
But plains, and levels all.

*Palmyra:*

Alas! I had not rendered up my heart,  
Had he not loved me first; but he preferred me  
Above the maidens of my age and rank, —  
Still shunned their company, and still sought mine.  
I was not won by gifts, yet still he gave;  
And all his gifts, though small, yet spake his love.  
He picked the earliest strawberries in woods,  
The clustered filberts, and the purple grapes;  
He taught a prating stare to speak my name;  
And, when he found a nest of nightingales,  
Or callow linnets, he would show them me,  
And let me take them out.<sup>2</sup>

*Polydamas:*

This is a little mistress, meanly born,  
Fit only for a prince's vacant hours,  
And then, to laugh at her simplicity,  
Not fix a passion there. Now hear my sentence.

*Leonidas:*

Remember, ere you give it, 'tis pronounced  
Against us both.

*Polydamas:*

First, in her hand  
There shall be placed a player's painted sceptre,  
And, on her head, a gilded pageant crown.  
Thus shall she go,  
With all the boys attending on her triumph;  
That done, be put alone into a boat,  
With bread and water only for three days;  
So on the sea she shall be set adrift,  
And who relieves her dies.

After some heroics by Leonidas, Hermogenes enters and reveals the fact that Palmyra is Polydamas' child.

<sup>2</sup> These birds were told about earlier in the romance in connection with the visit of the philosopher Pythagoras to Amenophis' island. Feeling that the birds in Timarete's aviary had human souls (in accordance with his well-known theory) he freed them. This nearly broke her heart, though she dared not find fault with so great a philosopher (p. 671).

In view of Saintsbury's denial (see p. 112) that Dryden used *Le Grand Cyrus* as a source for this plot, an example of how Dryden followed this source should, perhaps, be given. The quotation from *Marriage à la Mode* is from the last part of Act I, Scene 1. The quotation from *Le Grand Cyrus* is from Tome VI, Livre 2, pp. 753-758.

*Polydamas:*

. . . If from your hands  
You Powers, I shall this day  
receive a daughter,  
Argaleon, she is yours; but if a  
son,  
Then Amalthea's love shall  
make him happy.

. . . si i'ay vn fils, la Princesse  
Liserine l'épousera: & si i'ay  
vne Fille, Heracleon sera son  
Mary. . . (p. 753)

*Argaleon:*

Grant, heaven, this admirable  
nymph may prove  
That issue, which he seeks!

. . . à peine Heracleon eut il  
ieté les yeux sur Timarete,  
qu'il fit mille vœux secrets,  
qu'elle se pût trouver Fille  
d'Amasis: & à peine Liserine  
eut elle veû Sesostris, qu'elle  
désira aussi ardemment qu'il  
pût se trouver estre Fils du  
Roy. (p. 756)

*Amalthea:*

Venus Urania, if thou art a  
goddess,  
Grant that sweet youth may  
prove the prince of Sicily!

Here Hermogenes refuses at first to admit that the two children are not his own and tells the truth only when his peruke falls off, revealing his true character. In the romance, however, Traseas "ne s'amusa point à nier au Roy que la Reine eust esté a cette Isle" (p. 758). Then the drama begins again to follow the romance:

*Polydamas:*

If thou wouldst live, speak  
quickly,

. . . il luy demanda où estoit  
Amenophis, & ce qu'estoient



What is become of my Eudoxia?

Where is the queen and young Theagenes?

Where Eubulus: and which of these is mine? (*Pointing to Leon. and Palm.*)

*Hermogenes:*

Eudoxia is dead, so is the queen,

The infant king, her son, and Eubulus.

deuenus la Reine, le ieune Sesostris, & la Princesse Ladice.  
(p. 757)

Il (Traseas) luy aduoüa donc, que la Reine & Sesostris estoient venus a cette Isle, avec vne autre Princesse, qui estoit morte trois iours apres y estre arriuée: & morte en donnant la vie a vn Fils. Adioustant que quelques iours apres, vne maladie contagieuse ayant pris dans l'Isle, la Reine & le ieune Sesostris en estoient morts: & que depuis cela, Amenophis auoit fait donner le Nom de Sesostris au Fils de cette Princesse qui estoit morte en lui donnant la vie. (p. 758)

As can be seen from this sample, Dryden has not translated as directly from his source as he did in other plays, but has followed it very closely.

## APPENDIX C

### Mlle DE SCUDÉRY AND RESTORATION COMEDY

**A**S A further illustration of how much certain parts of Mlle de Scudéry's romances are in the spirit of Restoration comedy, I shall quote from Tome VI, Livre 1, of *Le Grand Cyrus*. Callicrate, since he cannot gain the love of Parthenie, soothes his *amour propre* by making it appear that he has done so. His actions remind one of the would-be's of Wycherley and Congreve. Callicrate (pp. 191-192) at last persuades Parthenie to write to him:

. . . elle se resolut de luy respondre: mais quoy que les Lettres de cette princesse fussent tres-jolies; qu'elles ne fussent que de choses indifferentes; & que bien souuent elle luy en escriuist avec dessein qu'il les monstrast; il n'en fit pourtant voir pas vne: si bien que tout le monde sçachant que Parthenie escriuoit a Callicrate, & voyant qu'il faisoit vn grand mistere de ses Lettres; les ennemies de cette Princesse tascherent de faire croire que l'intelligence qu'elle auoit avec Callicrate, n'estoit pas vne intelligence de bel esprit seulement. Mais pour acheuer de contenter sa vanité, Callicrate feignit d'auoir vn voyage à faire, où il donnoit des pretextes si peu vray-semblables, qu'il eust donné de la curiosité aux Gens du monde les moins curieux des affaires d'autrui. Et pour faire que cette curiosité fust plus generale, il fut dire adieu à toute la Cour: après quoy il partit sans mener personne aueque luy & partit mesme le soir: disant que parce qu'il faisoit chaud, il vouloit aller de nuit. De plus, comme il ne doutoit point qu'il n'y eust quelques personnes à Paphos, qui s'interesseroient assez en luy pour l'observer; aussi tost qu'il fut hors de la Ville, il prit le chemin qui alloit au lieu où demouroit la Princesse de Salamis: & en effet il fit iusques à cinquante stades de la Maison où elle estoit: puis tout d'un coup prenant plus à gauche, il fut se cacher chez un de ses Amis, sans luy en dire la

veritable cause: où il fut quinze iours tous entiers. Apres quoy, il reuint à Paphos: où ceux qui l'auoient fait suiure, comme il l'auoit bien preueû, auoient desia publié qu'il estoit allé faire une visite à la Princesse de Salamis. De sorte que lors qu'il reuint à la Cour, on ne manqua pas de luy demander pourquoy il auoit voulu cacher le lieu où il auoit esté? mais pour mieux faire croire la chose, il feignit d'estre en vne si grande colere contre ceux qui la disoient; & s'empressa tellement à dire que cela n'estoit pas; qu'enfin on vint à le croire. (pp. 191-194)

The spirit of this passage reminds one of Witwoud's description of Petulant in *The Way of the World* (I, 8):

. . . he wou'd slip you out of this chocolate-house, just when you had been talking to him — as soon as your back was turned — whip he was gone; — then trip to his lodging, clap on the hood and scarf, and a mask, slap into a hackney-coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice. where he wou'd send in for himself, that I mean, call for himself, wait for himself, nay and what's more, not finding himself, sometimes leave a letter for himself.

## APPENDIX D

### ROCHESTER AS WOODALL IN "MR. LIMBERHAM"

**A**LTHOUGH, as has been noted on page 195, it does not seem likely that the personal satire in *Mr. Limberham* as it now stands is important, the hitherto unnoticed likelihood that Woodall stood for Rochester seems to have more probability than that he stood for any of those whom Scott proposed. In Act I, Scene 1, of the play, Gervase, Woodall's man, outlines his past, very obviously for the purpose of informing the audience about it:

Your father sent you into France at twelve years old; bred you up at Paris, first in a college, and then at an academy: At the first, instead of running through a course of philosophy, you ran through all the bawdy-houses in town: At the latter, instead of managing the great horse, you exercised on your master's wife. What you did in Germany, I know not; but that you beat them all at their own weapon, drinking, and have brought home a goblet of plate from Munster, for the prize of swallowing a gallon of Rhenish more than the bishop.

Gervase's care to go into particulars about Woodall's past life in such detail has little dramatic value, and sounds as if somebody were being pointed at. We do not know enough about Rochester's life to be sure whether or not it was he, but there is nothing in what we do know about him which would make such a description unfitting. Besides, we do know that Rochester first went to college (Wadham) when he was twelve years old, and that at that time the lack of sobriety and temperance which was then common "produced some of its ill effects on him," so that "he began to

love these disorders too much."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Rochester did travel in Europe, returning to England in 1665, at the age of seventeen, to take his place in Charles' Court. While abroad he spent most of his time in France, as Woodall did.<sup>2</sup> We do not know that he went to Germany, but then we know very little about where he did go. We do know that he was always a great drinker.<sup>3</sup> Burnet<sup>4</sup> tells us that Rochester admitted to him that at one time he had been drunk for five years together. We also know, of course, that Rochester's sexual laxity was at least as great as that of Woodall. He told Burnet that he had often disguised himself for the purpose of better carrying on his amours. Finally, it is perhaps worth noting that Rochester married, as did Woodall, a great fortune. Pepys tells about his attempt to abduct the lady, Mrs. Elizabeth Malet, on May 28, 1665, and calls her "the great beauty and fortune of the North." Mrs. Malet was saved by her friends at that time, but she later married Rochester, on January 29, 1666/7.

If Dryden is satirizing Rochester in this play, the *Rose Alley Ambuscade* of 1679, which has always seemed to me to be insufficiently explained by Rochester's anger at Dryden for the verses which Mulgrave really wrote, and by Dryden's reference to Rochester in the preface to *All for Love* as a "rhyming judge of the twelvepenny gallery," is provided with a sufficient motive. Woodall is treated sympathetically in *Mr. Limberham*, it is true, but he is represented as the "genius of whoring," and even Rochester might object to that.

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Gilbert Burnet tells us this in *Some Passages of the Life and Death of the Right Honorable John, Earl of Rochester*, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that Woodall was different from Dryden's other comic heroes in this (see p. 44).

<sup>4</sup> *Op cit.*, p. 12.

# APPENDIX E

## THE INFLUENCE OF PLAUTUS ON DRYDEN'S "AMPHITRYON"

IN THE following list of parallels between Plautus' and Dryden's *Amphitryon* I have included only those passages in Dryden which are closer to Plautus than they are to Molière. Of course, there are numerous places where all three plays are identical, but, since Dryden undoubtedly had Molière's play by him and translated long passages from it, whereas there is not enough direct translation from Plautus to prove that he worked directly from the latter's play, it seems wise to consider Molière the immediate source in such places. The Loeb Classical Library edition of Plautus (Vol. I) is used.

### ACT I

Scene 1 contains nothing from Plautus.

Scene 2 contains nothing from Plautus (or Molière).

### ACT II

In Scene 1 Dryden, like Plautus, has both Sosia and Mercury on the stage at the beginning of the scene. In Molière Mercury does not enter until later. Act II also contains the following parallels between Dryden and Plautus:

*Dryden, II, 1*

*Plautus, I*

*Mercury: (aside)*

*Mercurius:*

This fellow has something of  
the republican spirit in him.<sup>1</sup>

. . . hic qui verna natus est  
queritur.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P. 35.

<sup>2</sup> P. 20.

*Mercury:*

There is an ill savour that offends my nostrils . . .<sup>3</sup>

*Sosia:*

. . . he must have hid himself in that hogshead, or he could never have known that!<sup>5</sup>

*Sosia:*

. . . He's damnable like me, that's certain. *Imprimis*, there's the patch upon my nose, with a pox to him. *Item*, A very foolish face, with a long chin at the end on't *Item*, One pair of shambling legs, with two splay feet belonging to them; and, *summa totalis*, from head to foot all my bodily apparel. . . .<sup>7</sup>

*Sosia:*

. . . I'll rather beat it back upon the hoof to my lord Amphitryon, to see if he will acknowledge me for Sosia; if he does not, then I am no longer his slave; there's my freedom dearly purchased with a sore drubbing . . .<sup>9</sup>

*Mercurius:*

Olet homo quidam malo suo.<sup>4</sup>

*Sosia:*

. . . mira sunt nisi latuit intus illic in illac hirnea.<sup>6</sup>

*Sosia:*

. . . nimis simulest mei; itidem habet petasum ac vestitum: tam consimilest atque ego; sura, pes, statura, tonsus, oculi, nasum vel labra, malae, mentum, barba, collus: totus. . . .<sup>8</sup>

*Sosia:*

Ibo ad portum atque haec uti sunt facta ero dicam meo; nisi etiam is quoque me ignorabit: quod ille faxit Iuppiter, ut ego hodie raso capite calvos capiam pilleum.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>3</sup> P. 35<sup>4</sup> P. 32.

<sup>5</sup> P. 41 This last is rather close to Molière, but undoubtedly closer to Plautus, since Molière had spoken of a bottle, rather than of a jug or a hogshead. Molière had said

"Et l'on n'y peut dire rien  
S'il n'était dans la bouteille"

<sup>6</sup> P. 46

<sup>7</sup> P. 41 The patch on the nose is, of course, Dryden's addition.

<sup>8</sup> P. 46.<sup>9</sup> P. 42.<sup>10</sup> P. 48.

*Dryden, II, 2**Alcmena:*

. . . You have not yet lain long  
 enough in bed,  
 To warm your widowed side.<sup>11</sup>

*Plautus, I**Alcmena:*

. . . prius abis quam lectus  
 ubi cubuisti concaluit lo-  
 cus. . . .<sup>12</sup>

## ACT III

Act III contains the following parallels between Dryden and Plautus:

*Dryden, III, 1**Sosia:*

Yes, very possible: You, my lord Amphitryon, may have brought forth another You my lord Amphitryon, as well as I, Sosia, have brought forth another Me, Sosia, and our diamonds may have procreated these diamonds, and so we are all three double.<sup>13</sup>

*Plautus, II**Sosia:*

. . . tu peperisti Amphitruonem, ego alium peperivi Sosiam,  
 nunc si patera pateram peperit,  
 omnes congeminavimus.<sup>14</sup>

*Alcmena:*

You would not stay to sup; but much complaining of your drowsiness, and lack of natural rest —

*Alcmena:*

Te dormire aibas; mensa ablata est, cubitum hinc abiimus.<sup>15</sup>

*Amphitryon:*

Made haste to bed: Ha, wasn't not so? . . .<sup>16</sup>

<sup>11</sup> P 43.<sup>12</sup> P 52 The resemblance between these last quotations is, of course, doubtful<sup>13</sup> P 61. The change from a bowl to diamonds was suggested by Molière, but the rest is in Plautus only<sup>14</sup> P 82.<sup>15</sup> P 62 Molière is very close to this quotation, but he says nothing of Amphitryon's having given sleepiness as the cause for wanting to go to bed. In this, at least, Dryden followed Plautus<sup>16</sup> P. 84.



*Amphitryon:*

. . . The truth shall, in the  
face of Thebes, be cleared:  
Thy uncle, the companion of  
my voyage,  
And all the crew of seamen  
shall be brought,  
Who were embarked, and came  
with me to land . . .<sup>17</sup>

*Amphitryon:*

Quid ais? responde mihi,  
quid si adduco tuum cognatum  
huc ab navi Naucratem,  
qui mecum una vectust una  
navi, . . .<sup>18</sup>

In the rest of Dryden's play there seems to be nothing resembling Plautus which is not closer to Molière than to the Latin poet. It is to be noted that Dryden could not have borrowed the middle part of the play from Plautus, even had he wanted to, since that part of the older play is lost.

<sup>17</sup> P. 64.<sup>18</sup> P. 88.

## APPENDIX F

### DRYDEN'S DEBT TO MOLIÈRE'S "AMPHITRYON"

AS NOTED in the text (see p. 226), the Reverend Mr. Harvey-Jellie's appendix on the sources of *Amphitryon* is not accurate. On page 97 of his work he says:<sup>1</sup> " Dans sa Préface, Dryden affirme que plus de la moitié de la pièce est de lui, mais un complet examen prouve le contraire." Appendix X of his work sets out to prove this by crediting much of Dryden's original material to Molière. All the first part of Act II, Scene 2, for instance, he says is Molière's, though some of Dryden's most characteristic additions are introduced there. Furthermore, he credits Act I, Scene 1, to Molière on the ground that it contains " pensées sur des faits racontés par Molière." He also makes the misleading statement that Phaëdra is " en partie une copie de Cléanthis " (a character in Molière).

Mr. Harvey-Jellie has missed, on the other hand, many of Dryden's borrowings from Molière, though not enough nearly to balance his errors on the other side. The last part of Act II, Scene 2, for instance, he calls original with Dryden, though most of it is from Molière. He overlooks Dryden's use of one of the two passages from Act III, Scene 5, of Molière, both of which Dryden used in Act V of his play. His most surprising omission is that of a passage at the beginning of Act V (p. 96), which, as Hartmann points out,<sup>2</sup> is rather closely translated from Scene 16 of *Le Mariage forcé*. Perhaps the printer's errors — Molière III, 6, instead of II, 6, and Molière III, 2, instead of III, 11 (eleven), should be mentioned, since these

<sup>1</sup> *Les Sources du théâtre anglais à l'époque de la Restauration*.

<sup>2</sup> *Einfluss Molière's auf Dryden's komisch-dramatische Dichtungen*, p. 38.

are not included in the list of seventy-five errata; nor is the incorrect date for the production of *Amphitryon*, which is given (p. 97) as 1696.

I devote so much space to this appendix of Mr. Harvey-Jellie's because it is recommended by Nicoll.<sup>3</sup>

In making the following analysis of Dryden's play, and particularly in allotting a certain number of pages of it to Dryden and a certain number to Molière, I should point out that it is impossible always to draw a line between original and influenced composition. It is true that many of the lines here credited to Molière are much changed in spirit and form by Dryden, and, on the other hand, that those which are given as Dryden's are often influenced by the spirit of Molière. It is only with this qualification that it can be stated that about forty-seven of the ninety-six pages of the play are from Molière, that about the same number are original with Dryden, and that the rest (about two pages) are from Plautus. An analysis of the sources of the play scene by scene follows:

Act I, Scene 1:

This is practically all Dryden's. He has followed Molière, it is true, in replacing the formal *Prologus* of Plautus by a conversation between gods. And the irreverent attitude of Mercury toward Jupiter is suggested in Molière. But only two short speeches may be directly attributed to Molière's lines. These are Mercury's speech (p. 22) beginning, "Madame night, a good even to you!" (see Hartmann, *op. cit.*, p. 30) and Night's speech (p. 23), "Tell him plainly, I'll rather lay down my commission. What, would he make a bawd of me?" The latter speech is so different from the line that suggested it as to make the propriety of crediting it to Molière doubtful. The scene is, then, nearly all Dryden's.

Act I, Scene 2:

This scene, in which Jupiter in the guise of Amphitryon is welcomed by Alcmena and Phaedra, is not in Molière or in Plautus,

<sup>3</sup> *A History of Restoration Drama*, p. 175, n.

although the fact that he is so greeted is mentioned, of course. It is, therefore, all Dryden's. It is to be noted, however, that Phaedra's announcement of Amphytrion's victory is in the spirit of Molière and that her asking Jupiter for money is reminiscent of *Le Dépit amoureux*, I, 2, which play Dryden had already used in *The Mock Astrologer*, IV, 2 (see p. 160). This is not mentioned by Hartmann. To repeat, this scene is all Dryden's.

Act II, Scene 1:

The beginning of this scene is like Molière, I, 1, though it is not closely translated until the point at which Sosia begins to address his lantern. Moreover, none of the speeches of Mercury in this first part are from Molière, since in the French play Mercury does not appear on the stage until a few lines before Sosia discovers him. Sosia's speech to his lantern (p. 30) is very close to Molière, I, 1 (see Hartmann, p. 39), but Dryden shortens it greatly, leaving out the last thirty-four lines of the speech as given in Molière. Dryden then begins (p. 34) to translate Molière, I, 2 (at line eleven, the first part of this speech is one of Hartmann's omissions) and continues to follow Molière to the end of the scene, though not so closely in some places as in others, several bits of this part being taken from Plautus (see Appendix E). This scene is nearly all Molière's.

Act II, Scene 2:

The first ten lines follow closely the opening of Molière, I, 3 (see Hartmann, p. 31). Then come lines of Dryden's own, some in a romantic vein, some almost heroic. Beginning with Jupiter's speech (p. 44), "But yet one scruple pains me at my parting," Dryden follows Molière, I, 3, though not closely (Hartmann apparently does not consider this close enough for effective illustration, for he omits it). The discussion between Jupiter and Alcmena here concerning the difference between the love of a husband and that of a lover is one of Molière's significant additions to Plautus, and Dryden has used it. The conversation between Phaedra and Mercury which begins on page 46 is all Dryden's. After the entrance of Bromia (p. 49) Dryden translates Molière, I, 4, closely (see Hartmann, pp. 31-32) as far as the fight between Mercury and Bromia (p. 51), which is Dryden's own.

This scene, if we leave out of account the small amount of Plautus (see Appendix E), is about half from Molière, half original with Dryden.

Act III, Scene 1:

This scene is largely from Molière. Dryden begins to translate closely, after a page and a half of dialogue between Amphitryon and Sosia that is his own. The close translation begins (p. 54) with Sosia's speech, "But would you be pleased to answer me one civil question?" This is from Molière, II, 1 (see Hartmann, pp. 32-35). With the entrance of Alcmena and Phaedra (p. 57) Dryden continues to translate from Molière, now using II, 2. He has followed his French model closely in most of the lines, though he has added a few speeches by Phaedra, besides borrowing three bits from Plautus (see Appendix E). The conversation between Sosia and Phaedra (pp. 64-67) is Dryden's own. With the entrance of Bromia (p. 67) Dryden returns to Molière, II, 3 (see Hartmann, p. 35); the fact that Phaedra and Bromia are here on the stage together for a while renders it necessary for Dryden to make additions to the dialogue, since in this scene both Phaedra and Bromia correspond to Molière's Cléanthis. The conversation between Jupiter, Phaedra, and Sosia, beginning on page 71, and the song at the end of the scene are Dryden's. This scene then is about two thirds Molière's and one third Dryden's.

Act IV, Scene 1:

For the first few lines Dryden follows Molière, II, 6 (see Hartmann, pp. 35-36); then he inserts a page of dialogue (p. 75) of his own. After this he follows Molière again as far as the bottom of page 77. In these last two pages, however, Dryden has made some additions to the character of Alcmena, and has shortened the time required to make her give in to Jupiter's arguments, with the result that she seems here more changeable and coy than in Molière. The conversation between Mercury and Phaedra (p. 78) is Dryden's, except for the first two speeches, which are from Molière, II, 7 (this is one of Hartmann's infrequent omissions). With the entrance of Amphitryon (p. 79) Dryden begins again to borrow from Molière, III, 1 (see Hartmann, pp. 36-38); the imitation is not close until Mercury says, "This is no very charitable action," from which point Dryden translates for ten

pages from Molière, III, 2, 3, and 4, and from a part of III, 7. The addition of Judge Gripus to the number of the banquet guests causes the introduction here of a few lines by Dryden. With the entrance of Phaedra (p. 89) Dryden leaves Molière, and the last six pages of the scene are Dryden's own. This scene is slightly more Molière's than Dryden's.

Act V, Scene 1:

The first few lines are Dryden's own, but from the entrance of Mercury (p. 96) to the words of Gripus, "I renounce her, I release her," Dryden imitates a part of Scene 16 of Molière's *Le Mariage forcé* (see Hartmann, p. 38). There follows a short conversation (pp. 98-99) between Amphytrion and Phaedra which is Dryden's. From the entrance of Jupiter, Tranio, and Polidas (p. 99) to the beginning of the taking of evidence and the judging of the two Amphytrions by Judge Gripus (p. 101) Dryden follows Molière, III, 5 (see Hartmann, pp. 38-39). But from that point to the speech of Amphytrion (p. 105) beginning, "Thou would'st elude my justice" Dryden has no model. Beginning with that speech, however, he borrows a few lines from Molière, III, 5, and a bit (bottom p. 105) from Molière, III, 10 (see Hartmann, p. 39). Except for a bit from Molière, III, 10, which he uses at the bottom of page 106, the rest of the play up to the appearance of Jupiter in a machine (p. 109) is Dryden's. The final speech of Jupiter, "Look up Amphytrion . . .," and the comments by the other characters on this speech which close the play are suggested by Molière, III, 11, as Hartmann has shown. About two thirds of this act are Dryden's; one third is Molière's.



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